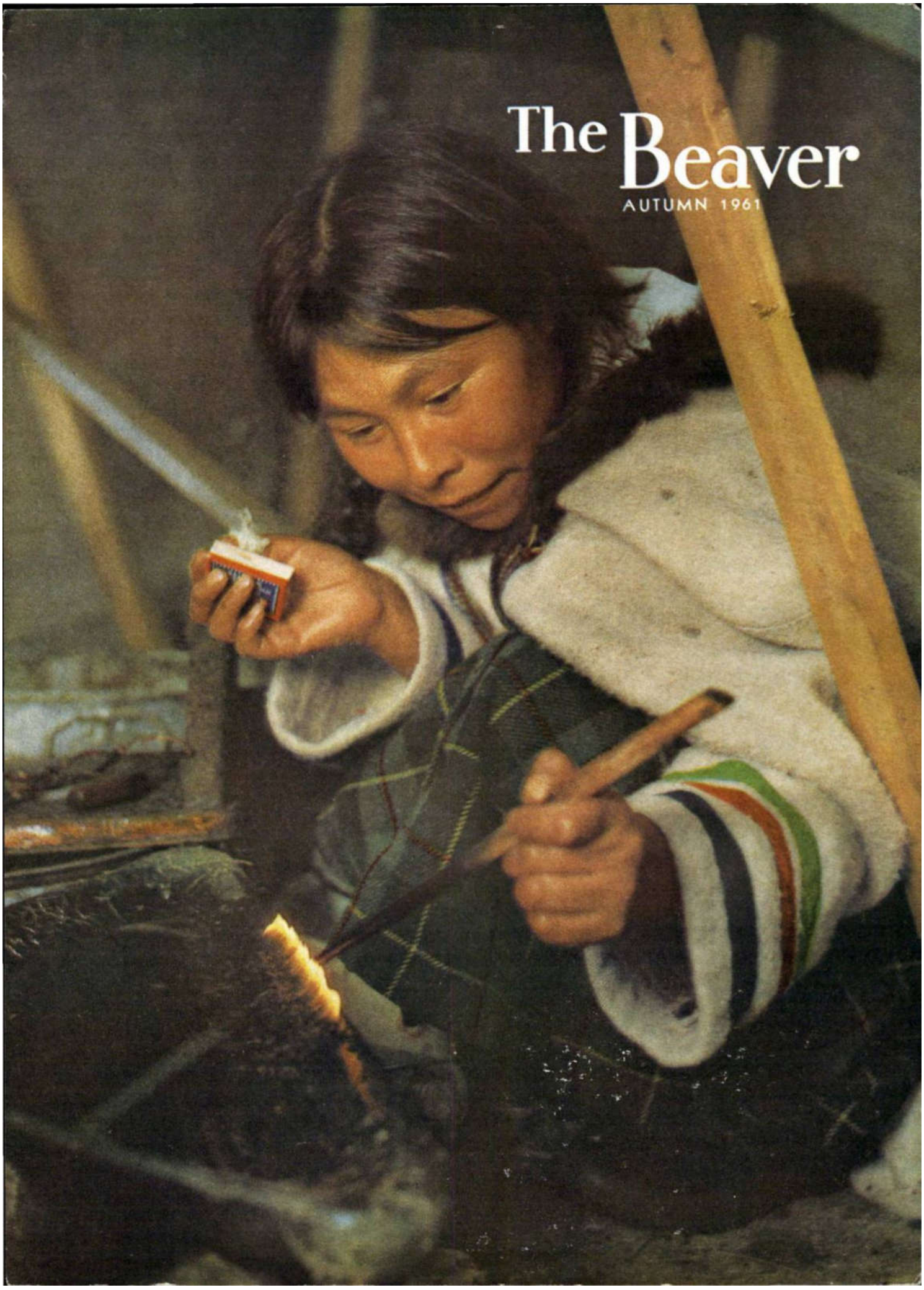

The Beaver

AUTUMN 1961

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Here are the Eskimo syllabics for "Birds in Flight"—the title of this charming woodcut done by Alice Otokiak, a 12-year-old girl at Cambridge Bay, N.W.T.

One of many talented Eskimo children growing up today in the new North, she will know a better life than her ancestors did as they faced the challenge of existence on the high rim of our continent.

The Hudson's Bay Company is proud of its long association with these people of the Arctic. As new opportunities open to the Eskimo, we share, with all Canadians, a sense of gratification and hope for their future.

Hudson's Bay Company.

INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670

The Beaver

MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH

Editor: Malvina Bolus

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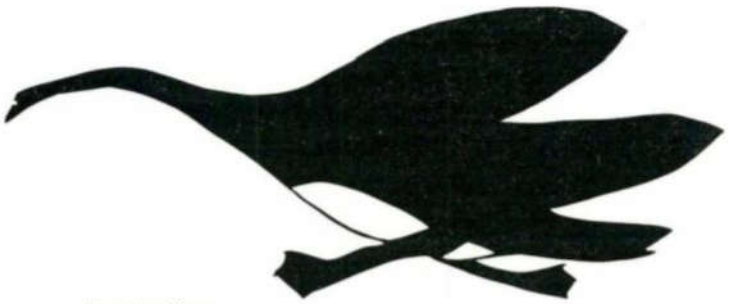

Running Goose
by Eejyoudluk

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COVER

Imaginative artist Kenojuak in her tent at Cape Dorset where she looks after her husband and two children.

Photograph by Rosemary Gilliat

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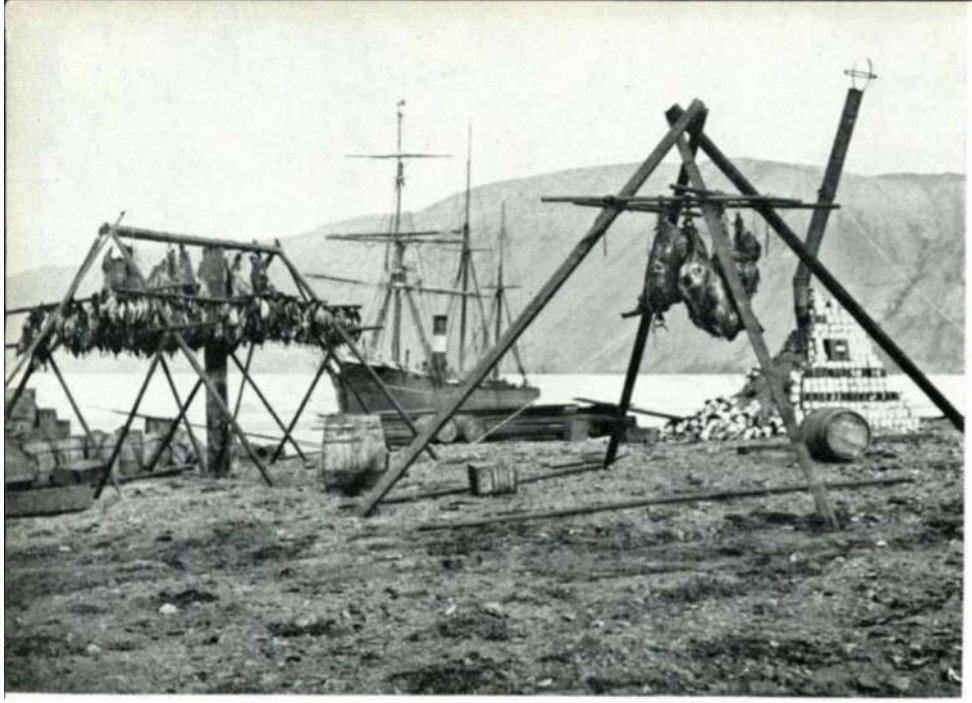
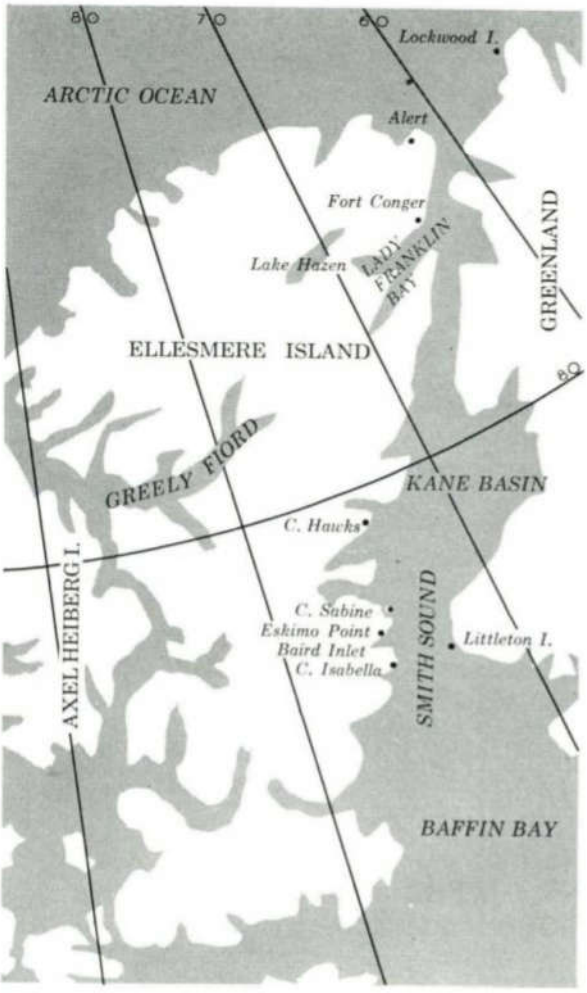


Game racks at Fort Conger site where the "Proteus" landed the party in August 1881. Nare's men left the cairn of tins and earth in 1876. U.S. Signal Corps

THE GREELY ORDEAL

BY L. H. NEATBY

Participation in the International Polar Year of 1882-3 resulted in tragedy



IN August 1852, when Commander Inglefield, R.N., broke into Smith Sound, where northern Ellesmere Island and Greenland draw close, he exploded the age-old belief that it was a land-locked bay. Before a gale from the north drove him back by the way he had come, he was able to identify several features in the basin beyond. Directly ahead he made out a rocky snout falling away into the sea to mark the northern outlet of the Sound. This he named after the celebrated soldier-scientist, Colonel Edward Sabine. Thirty years later Cape Sabine was to be the scene of a most gruesome tragedy.

In the years that followed, Kane, Hayes, Hall, and Nares extended Inglefield's discoveries and found a water route which separated Greenland from Ellesmere Island and debouched into the Central Arctic to permit navigation at a higher latitude than was possible on any other meridian. Hence when the United States joined with the European powers to set up circumpolar stations for scientific observations, it chose Lady Franklin Bay near the top of this channel on the Ellesmere shore as the site of its most northerly post. There in August 1881 Lieutenant Adolphus W. Greely set up his detachment which consisted of twenty officers and men of the regular Army, two civilian volunteers, Sergeants George W. Rice, photographer (a Nova Scotian), and Edward Israel, astronomer, Octave Pavy, surgeon, and two Greenland Eskimos as dog-drivers. At the time inconspicuous among his fellows, but later to become their virtual leader, was Sergeant David L. Brainard. Of good birth and education, he had enlisted in the ranks of the United States Cavalry in search of adventure. He was to have more than he bargained for, and it was chiefly due to his integrity,

Dr. Neatby of Acadia University faculty has drawn the material in this article from his new book, to be published later by Longmans, Green & Company.

stability, and common-sense that six men of the party came back to tell of the horrors that had cut off the rest.

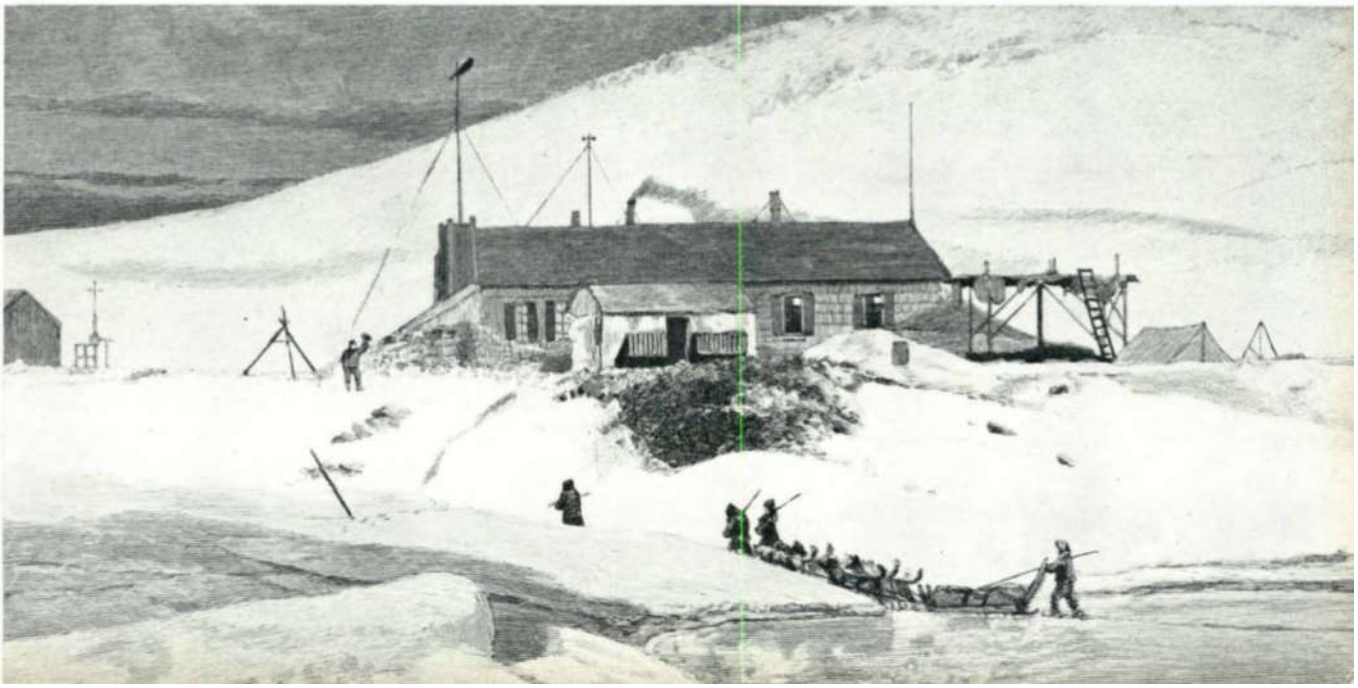
If Greely had not been let down by the authorities at home he would be remembered only as an enterprising and successful discoverer. In addition to carrying out the magnetic and meteorological observations for which the station had been set up he organized extended journeys for the spring of 1882. Lieutenant Lockwood, with Brainard and an Eskimo driver, sledged up the Greenland north shore to Lockwood Island in latitude 83°24″ thus robbing England of the "farthest north" record which had been hers since the days of Henry Hudson. Greely himself took a party inland, discovered Eskimo remains, and ascended to the height of land west of Lake Hazen. Though the promised supply ship failed to reach their camp, which they called Fort Conger, in 1882, they passed a second winter in cheer and comfort, and in the following spring Lockwood and Brainard made the crossing of Ellesmere Island to Greely Fiord on its western side.

Greely's orders were that if the supply vessel failed to reach him by September 1, 1883, he was to boat down towards Smith Sound, the War Department pledging itself either to meet him by ship or to leave adequate food, clothing, and building materials at one of three rendezvous on the Ellesmere shore, Cape Hawks, Cape Sabine, and Cape Isabella. It is not likely that the man who wrote in this emergency clause dreamed that it would ever become operative. A voyage of two hundred miles in open boats through ice-strewn seas was a serious undertaking for sailors, let alone a detachment with not a single professional seaman among them. They had hunted the musk-ox with success, and were supplied for another winter. The sober realist Brainard hoped that his commander would disregard his orders, or bring the boats back to Conger after a merely token attempt to comply with them. But Greely resolved not only to adhere to the order but to set out in early August, arguing reasonably enough that if they were to sail at all they should do so before the young ice—a serious obstacle to boats—began to form. He may have been influenced in this fatal decision by the impatience of the men, who had behaved well for two winters but would not willingly have endured detention for a third.

They sailed on August 9 with three whalers in tow of a steam launch, and the course of events soon justified Brainard's forebodings. They were hampered by rain and fog and repeatedly pinned to the shore—on one occasion for five days—by ice. The optimism and cheer which marked the departure quickly evaporated: two chronic malcontents, Lieutenant Kislingbury and Dr. Pavy, plotted to depose Greely from the command, and secured the backing of Rice, a good amateur boatman, who had, one supposes, been snubbed by the less experienced but martinet Greely. The mutiny was nipped in the bud by the loyalty of Brainard who was himself smarting from the insults of the overwrought and irritable commander. They reached the Cape Hawks rendezvous to find that it had not been visited, and then were beset in the pack. For several weeks they eddied helplessly around Kane Basin, carried south by the current and swept back by the wind, until on September 26 they made land in Baird Inlet after two months of continuous exposure in open boats.

The point where they were cast ashore was midway between Capes Sabine and Isabella. Rice made a journey to the former point and returned in a week with grim tidings. He had found a record in a cairn which stated

Fort Conger on Lady Franklin Bay in May 1883, after two winters, taken from a photograph. *U.S. Signal Corps*



Launch "Lady Greely" in August '83 shortly before leaving to tow the boats south. Only one boat survived the journey. U.S. Signal Corps

that the chartered sealer *Proteus* had come up, supported by the U.S.S. *Yantic* several days behind her; she had been nipped and sunk off Cape Sabine where her crew had left a small wreck-cache before going south by boat to meet the *Yantic*. "Everything within the power of man," it was stated, would be done to bring the promised relief. Greely and his men were not aware that the *Yantic* was a frail vessel whose commander had been forbidden to take her into the ice, but it was obvious that such a pledge given in July, had little value in October.

The entire party travelled up the Ellesmere shore to where the cache had been found. At the foot of the cliffs on the north side of Cape Sabine and sheltered on the seaward side by a natural sea wall of crumbled rock they built a stone hut roofed over with a whale-boat, and there prepared to pass the winter. They could not hope for relief in less than nine months; an inventory taken by Brainard proved them supplied for only two. Greely assigned a ration of one-fifth of the allowance at Fort Conger. If they were to live, they must live off that, plus whatever game that barren region afforded.

They had ascertained that Cape Sabine was not part of the Ellesmere continent but divided from it by a narrow channel, called after its discoverer, Rice Strait. There was a touching significance in the name given to the island itself. Thirty years before when the crew of H.M.S. *Investigator* were in similar plight they had been rescued by Lieutenant Bedford Pim of the *Resolute*. In memory of this incident which they must often have spoken of, and as an omen of a like deliverance, the castaways named the sea-girt rock on which they were marooned Pim Island.

Greely has been censured for suffering his men to starve in a region where the later Sverdrup expedition found food in abundance. Such criticism is utterly unrealistic. The musk-ox grounds were fifty miles away. The Americans had no dog transport for bringing the meat in, and to move inland and follow the game in nomad fashion in the depth of winter with his large party was utterly out of the question. Already some of the men were losing spirit and sinking into a state of dependence on their stronger and more resolute comrades. Furthermore Greely hoped, mistakenly as it happened, but with good reason, that the *Yantic* had left a substantial depot and perhaps a wintering-party on Littleton Island only forty miles away on the other side of Smith Sound. His choice, if choice he had, was the best under the circumstances.

As soon as the camp was properly set up and the sea securely frozen the energetic Rice was granted permission to take three men, Frederick (a magnificent stalwart), Elison, and Lynn, to pick up a small deposit of meat cached at Cape Isabella by the British Nares expedition. They reached the cache on the third day, loaded up the meat and started back in the teeth of a rising wind. All were suffering acutely from thirst: Lynn and Elison, despite orders and a mutual pledge to the contrary, began to eat snow. Elison had been troubled by frostbites on the outward journey; now his body became incapable of resisting the cold, and all his limbs were frozen. His distracted comrades could not resolve to abandon the meat on which so much toil had been expended; for a time they relayed with the meat and their crippled comrade. Frederick even tried to carry Elison on his back while hauling at the sledge-ropes, the poor man crying out all the while with pain.

Rice was soon convinced that to persevere in this endeavour meant death for them all. He therefore tipped the meat off the sledge, marked its whereabouts by a rifle planted upright in the snow, and carried Elison to an abandoned hut on the shore of Baird Inlet. The following day they pushed on but found it impossible to continue with the helpless Elison. Failing to light a fire in the gale, Lynn and Frederick crawled into the sleeping bag (exposed on the open ground) with Elison to keep him alive, while Rice, with a piece of frozen meat to sustain him, set off on the seventeen mile tramp to Cape Sabine. He arrived speechless and fainting. As soon as he was revived and his story understood Greely sent Brainard and Eskimo Fred to do what they could for the immediate relief of the sufferers, while Lieutenant Lockwood followed with the large sledge to bring them in.

Brainard found Elison clear in his mind, but suffering all the more on that account and imploring his comrades to kill him. Lynn and Frederick were both weak and frostbitten; the former, distracted by Elison's cries, was slightly delirious. With great difficulty, for the wind still blew, Brainard started a fire and served a hot meal, "stewed sealskins and fox intestines, thickened with mouldy dog biscuit." He had hoped to get Elison on the

Eskimo Fred, Sgt. David L. Brainard, and Lt. J. B. Lockwood in April 1882 leaving on the trip which took them farthest north. U.S. Signal Corps

small sledge and with the help of his comrades start off and so shorten Lockwood's journey; but both Lynn and Frederick declared themselves incapable of this exertion. Such a plea from Frederick could not be disregarded, so the stalwart sergeant left them where they were and started back to meet and guide the main party. He joined them at the drag-ropes, and when they halted for a rest went forward again to cook another meal for the invalids and cut them out of their sleeping bag, in preparation for departure. In two days the operation was over and Elison brought in alive. As Dr. Pavy lacked the will or the means to perform the amputations which he declared necessary, the poor fellow's hands and feet were left to drop off one by one. "He begged piteously for death the first week, but within a month was a bright and cheery member of our party, despite his utter helplessness and great pain."

Greely characterizes this journey as "the most remarkable in the annals of Arctic sledging," and the claim is well founded. In cold and a gale of wind eight starved men travelled upwards of forty miles to rescue comrades whom they had little hope of finding alive. It is pathetic that this heroism was ultimately cheated of its reward. Of rescuers and rescued alike Brainard and Frederick only were to travel the hard road to the very end.

By a disastrous oversight the party carried no harpoon for the recovery of seal, and though Sergeant Francis Long (Franz Lange, no doubt, for he was German by birth), and the two Eskimos hunted assiduously, they brought in little but the occasional fox or ptarmigan. That in this state of prolonged and almost hopeless suffering discipline and morale were preserved was due to a knot of resolute men, who, though they sacrificed themselves freely, were among the few survivors. Greely, despite his feeble health, kept ultimate control; owing to the ineffectiveness of the other two officers, the duties of administration descended by a sort of natural inheritance to the cool and devoted Brainard. He directed the daily routine and frequently carried out his own orders owing to the weakness and indifference of the group over which he presided. In any case the assignment of tasks depended less on willingness than on character: the hunter, Long, doubled up with Frederick as cook, for no other men could be so well trusted with food. There was some pilfering, extraordinarily little, says Greely, considering the overmastering temptation, and only in one instance could it be called systematic and criminal. As cases of sickness multiplied Private Biederbick discharged the office of nurse with matchless integrity. It was due to these men and to the gallant Rice that some few lived through what poor Long told his rescuers had been a "hard winter." They never knew that the hope of provisions on Littleton Island was a delusion, for heavy gales and the perennial current kept the waters of Smith Sound unfrozen. A plucky tramp of fifty miles by Rice and Eskimo Jens failed to discover a crossing, and the attempt was never repeated.

All but one lived into April; then the deaths of four men in rapid succession gave warning of an impending collapse. Greely yielded to Rice's insistence and granted leave for him and Frederick to go in search of the meat left in Baird Inlet in November.

The two men made their way to the abandoned hut on Eskimo Point and there dropped their sleeping gear and part of their rations to make the rest of the journey with lightened sledge. The tide, driving round grounded bergs, had opened troublesome pools, and in places had overflowed the level surface, thus soaking their footwear, which froze hard as soon as they regained dry ice. They reached and roughly identified the spot where the meat had been left, but no trace of it remained, and they feared that shifting ice had carried it out of the inlet. Rice was very loath to admit that the journey of which he had been such a strenuous advocate had been made in vain. Despite a rising gale and the protests of his comrade he tramped around in widening circles until seized with dizziness. Frederick supported him to an iceberg half a mile away, and laying him in the lee of the sledge

U.S. Adjutant General's Office

The hut where the party wintered 1883-4 at Cape Sabine, with Sgt. Brainard leaving to collect shrimps. Built of stones with the boat for roof, the remains of the building in 1960 are shown below.

E. J. Briscoe

kindled the lamp in the hope that a hot meal might revive him. Rice's mind began to wander; he raved of friends at home and of the food that he would enjoy in their company; in lucid moments, knowing that his end was near, he charged his companion with messages to his loved ones and with the delivery of certain papers. Frederick stripped off his jumper, wrapped it around the feet of his friend, and held him in his arms until he died. The overburdened soldier would have welcomed the same relief from his own distress, but for the pledges he had just given and the certainty that, if neither returned, their comrades would incur danger and exhaustion by coming out to look for them. So he struggled back to Eskimo Point, and finding the sleeping bag frozen as hard "as a piece of cordwood," strengthened himself with ammonia drops to pry it open and sleep for a few hours. On awakening he tramped the six miles back to where the dead man lay and collected the memorials committed to his care. He then spent several hours hacking a grave out of the ice and piling the chips and slivers over his friend's body. "A heap of broken ice is all that marks the resting place of the bravest and noblest member of the expedition."

In a sense it is unfortunate that Rice came from a young country which, in the heyday of growth and expansion, assigned higher honours to success than to heroic but fruitless endeavour. Had he been a Briton he would have shared a place in the national legend with Scott's companion, Captain Oates, with that advantage which active valour may justly claim over passive. A fitting pendant to his tale of self-sacrifice is Brainard's comment that while some were thieving from their comrades Frederick brought back and delivered to him untouched the remaining portion of Rice's travelling rations.

About this time Long shot his one and only polar bear, but this windfall was far more than offset by the tragic drowning of the brave and zealous Eskimo Jens, and by the loss of a rifle and his kayak—indispensable, as spring advanced, for retrieving wildfowl from the water. On one occasion Long shot two dovekies and two eider ducks only to see them carried away by the ebbing tide. Brainard made a rake for the gathering of seaweed, and fashioned a net which he baited with sealskin or dovekie's legs to fish for shrimps. Sverdrup's translator calls these by the less appetizing name of sand-fleas: they were the size of a half grown fly, says Brainard, and measured three hundred to the gill.

Four of the remaining eighteen men died in May, the last being the youthful astronomer, Israel. Delicately brought up and of slight physique, but brave and willing, poor "Benjamin" had been a great favourite with the rude soldiers among whom his lot was cast. In his last hours he pleaded hard for a spoonful of rum to ease his sufferings and Greely, much against his conscience but with the consent of all, broke for once the harsh rule that no food or stimulant should be expended on one whose life was despaired of. His body was laid beside the others on the low ridge which overlooked the camp from the east. Feeble and despondent Brainard noticed almost with indifference that driving winds had swept the gravel away and laid bare Lynn's feet and the buttons of Lockwood's tunic.

With the approach of summer pools appeared here and there in the snow, and the hut, built low for the sake of shelter, became uninhabitable. So the dwindling band moved inland to a slope at the foot of the cliffs and took up its quarters in a miserable tent. Rations were entirely consumed by the 1st of June. They were living on shrimps, seaweed, and a jelly distilled from sealskin garments. Greely and the feebler men crawled out among the rocks to gather *tripe de roche*, a lichen that was edible but of doubtful nutritive value. Private Henry,

already loathed as a systematic thief, became bolder in his depredations, and confident in his strength which was "greater than that of any two men," met Greely's remonstrance with defiance. He misjudged his leader's quality. Greely handed a written order for his execution to Brainard, Frederick, and Long. Two weeks later the rescue party found his body lying in a puddle with two bullet wounds, but the precise manner of his death the three sergeants had bound themselves with an oath never to disclose.

By the middle of the month eight men only remained alive. While the main party lay in the tent uphill, the hunters and shrimpers spent most of the time near the hut on the beach. Long still feebly crawling up and down in search of wildfowl, while Brainard plied his shrimping net, with indifferent success for want of a tastier bait than sealskin. On the 21st of June a strong gale drove them also to the tent. Private Schneider died, and to rid themselves of the odour of his scurvy-infected mouth the others tried to drag his body from the tent, but in their feeble breathlessness could only slew it around and leave it half in and half out of the wretched awning which sheltered his dying comrades. Throughout the 22nd they lay imprisoned with the gale raging about them. A tentpole cracked and the drooping fabric almost pinned them to the ground. The maimed Elison was still punctually fed, and as he seemed likely to outlive the rest a spoon was bound to the stump of his right arm that he might feed on the vile sealskin jelly when no comrade was left to assist him. About noon Brainard or Frederick (no one could remember which) distributed water. Greely tried to read aloud from the Prayer Book, but found it beyond his strength.

As evening came on the roar of wind and surf began to die away, and late in the evening Greely fancied that he heard the sound of a steam whistle blown thrice. He called to Brainard and Long, if they had the strength, to mount the sea wall and investigate; they answered that they would if they could. After an absence of ten minutes Brainard came back alone: there was nothing in sight, he said, and not too pleased at the wasted exertion, remarked that what Greely had heard was the water cans outside the tent stirring in the wind. He added that Long had gone over to set up the distress signal which had been flattened by the wind, and turning a deaf ear to Biederbick's suggestion that the ship might be lying in Payer Harbour on the other side of the cape, went back to his sleeping bag. The momentary stir was over, and there they lay, too stupefied to notice that Long's return was unreasonably delayed. Suddenly the stillness was broken by a sound to which their ears had long been strangers —muffled by the wind, but unmistakeable—not Long's faltering tread, but the measured footbeats of a strong man running fast towards them. Before they could gather their wits the steps halted by their little cavern and from the vastness outside came a joyous shout, "Are ye ther-re, Greely?" It was the voice of Norman, the old Scottish ice-mate bringing word that the long anguish had not been wholly in vain, and that a remnant of their gallant band had at the last moment been plucked back from death.

* * *

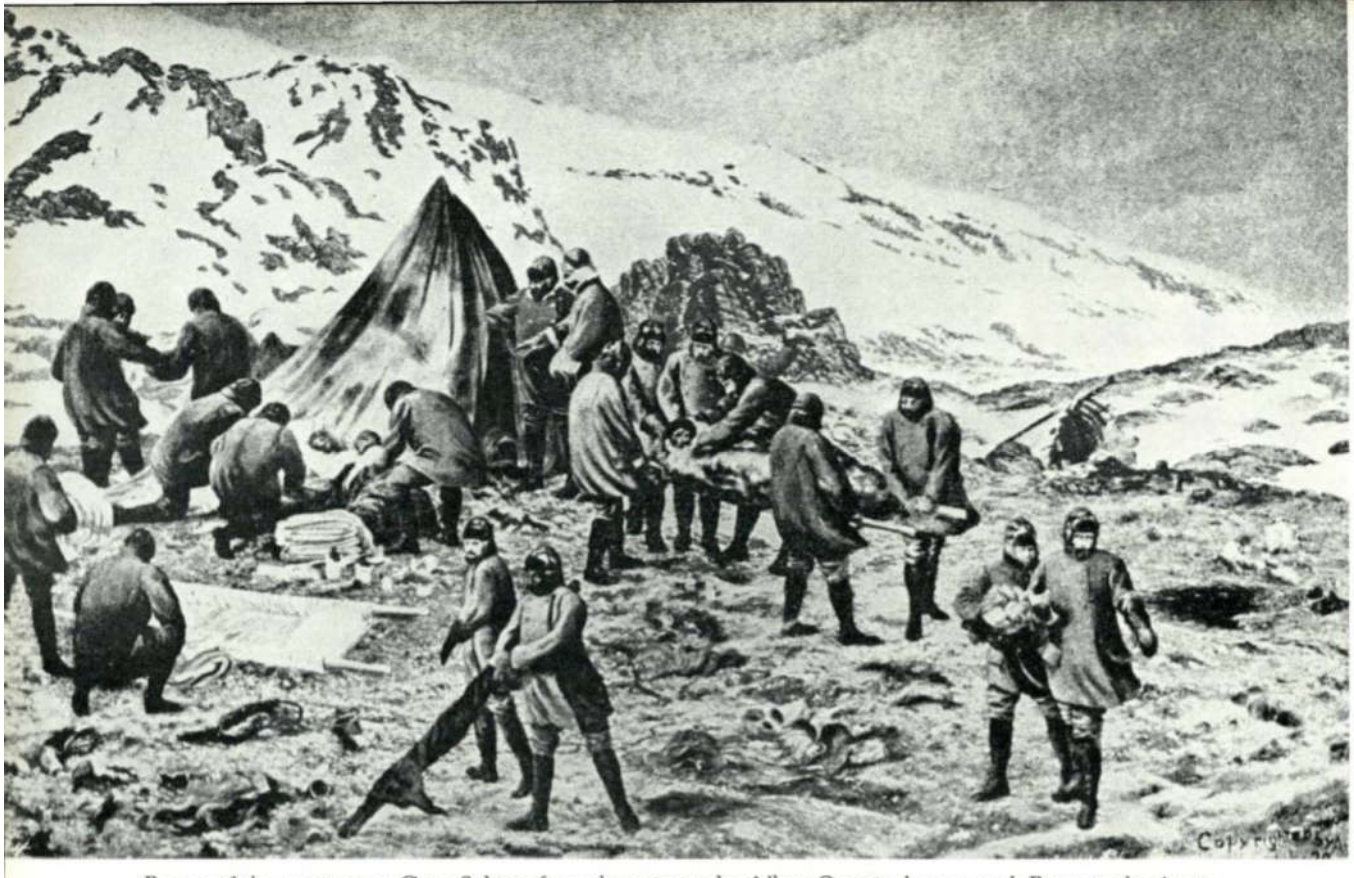
IN THE winter of 1883-4 the American Government had taken steps for Greely's relief which, if adopted earlier would have ensured the safe return of his entire party. The Newfoundland sealer *Bear*, and the whaler *Thetis* of Dundee, Scotland, were purchased; the British Admiralty, in grateful remembrance of the salvaging of H.M.S. *Resolute*, made them a gift of Nares' old *Alert*; the three were placed under the orders of Commander W. S. Schley, who sailed in May with three Arctic veterans to advise him: Chief Engineer G. M. Melville, the hero of the *Jeannette's* disastrous Siberian cruise, Lieutenant J. C. Colwell, the only officer who had emerged with credit from the fiasco of the relief party the previous autumn, and the ice-mate Norman, who had piloted Greely on his voyage up to Fort Conger. Schley reached Smith Sound on the unprecedently early date of June 22nd and anchored that evening on the east side of Pim Island where it was learnt from a record that eight months before the missing party had made camp on the far side of Cape Sabine with forty days' rations in hand. Dead or alive they would not be far to seek. Colwell and Norman were sent ahead in the cutter while the ships raised anchor and prepared to follow.

It was near midnight of the year's longest day, and the sun, stooping low behind the cloud-wrack, gave the light of a dull winter afternoon. As the cutter rounded the cape and opened up the ragged shore, Colwell knew that the voyage had not been made entirely in vain. On the crest of a low ridge beyond a gravel bar he made out the figure of a man labouring to set up a stunted flag pole. As they drew near the sailors shouted with all the power of their lungs while the coxswain stood up and waved the American ensign. The man saw them and made a gesture of recognition. He came down the rocky slope with extreme caution and was observed to fall twice before reaching the beach. One look at his starved form determined Colwell's first question:

"Who all are left?"

"Seven left."

The man bore a ghastly appearance, cheeks hollow, eyes wild, his hair and beard long and matted. He wore



Rescue of the survivors at Cape Sabine, from the painting by Albert Operti who was with Peary in the Arctic.
U.S. Signal Corps

a ragged army blouse over several thicknesses of shirts and jackets, and sealskin moccasins were bound about his legs with string. His utterance was thick and mumbling in the effort of speech his jaws worked with convulsive twitches.

"Where are they?"

"In the tent over the ridge."

"Is Mr. Greely alive?"

"Yes, Greely's alive."

"Any other officers?"

"No. The tent is down."

"Who are you?"

"Long."

Colwell bade the coxswain take the man into the boat and give him a little food. He and Norman filled their pockets with biscuit and pemmican and set off in the direction indicated by Long. From the crest of the sea wall they saw the gravel patch of Cemetery Ridge to their left and before them a rocky hollow bounded on the farther side by sandstone cliffs. A short way up the rubble at its foot was the drooping tent. Norman, the first to descry it, ran headlong towards it, and when Colwell came up was speaking to a "soldierly-looking man" who was gnawing a biscuit. Recognizing an officer Brainard was about to salute when Colwell arrested the movement and grasped him by the hand as he slipped by into the tent. The first objects that met his eyes were the corpse of Schneider, lying half in and half outside the tent, and Private Connell, stretched out stiffly, with Biederbick and Frederick, self-forgetful to the last, pouring down his throat the last dregs of their long-hoarded rum. In the obscurity of the background was Greely, clad in red skull cap and tattered dressing gown, with eyes of preternatural brightness. The floor was strewn with torn clothing, ragged sleeping-bags, and filth. Connell was speechless and his pulse almost gone. A little brandy revived him sufficiently to grasp that help had come and he must make a fresh effort to live.

Colwell sent word to the cutter to report to the *Bear* and bring off the surgeon with stimulants. In the meantime he measured out small quantities of bread and pemmican to the starving inmates of the tent. They could no longer stand, but rested on their knees, and held out their hands begging piteously for more, "protesting that it could do them no harm." With the taste of food the sense of hunger, long paralyzed, returned "like a drunkard's craving for rum." Seeing that he could obtain no more the masterful Greely laid hold of a can of sealskin jelly, declaring that it was his and he might do with it as he pleased; and when Colwell placed it beyond his reach, abused and reviled him.

While this was going on the cutter had carried Long to the ship. The sailors good-heartedly stuffed the inside of his jacket with biscuit which the ship's surgeon soon

detected and removed. Poor Long could give no clear account of the winter's trials. He repeated the words, "Sore distress, sore distress," in answer to all interrogations.

On shore his six comrades had been removed from the tent and laid in the shelter of an improvised windbreak. Fragments of wood were gathered and kindled into a roaring fire, while the surgeon prepared milk-punch and beef-tea which he administered every ten minutes. When the first thrill of meeting and recognition was over the survivors relapsed into a dull apathy from which only the mention of food could arouse them. When told that they had brought him a recent photograph of his wife and children Greely muttered civilly that it was very kind of them.

The crews made haste to gather up the relics of the expedition and take their departure from that ill-omened

Actual photograph of the tent soon after the rescuers arrived on 22 June 1884. *U.S. Adjutant General's Office*

shore. The bodies of the most recent casualties had been dropped into the sea by their enfeebled comrades; those of the others were disinterred and along with the corpse of the wretched Henry which lay where it had been struck down, were taken aboard for burial at home. Though evidence appeared that the castaways had been driven to the last horrible resource of hunger-crazed men, Commander Schley asked no questions and made no allusions: if the story were to be told the survivors themselves must tell it with no inquisitive promptings from those who had had no share in their sufferings and temptation.

The pitiless veracity with which, save in this last instance, Greely and Brainard have recorded the happenings of that terrible winter has clothed the tragedy of Cape Sabine with an air of repulsiveness which ought not to be its most prominent feature. Greely claims on behalf of his followers that never did men so tempted display a higher degree of self-denial and comradeship, and the maimed Elison lived to prove the truth of this assertion. During the first days of the homeward voyage Chief Engineer Melville became much attached to this man who had been so well cared for that he was the most talkative and animated of the seven invalids. Forgetful of his own adventures and trials he was forever questioning Melville about the cruise of the *Jeannette*, applauding his courageous endeavours, and sympathizing with him on the loss of the comrades whom he had come too late to save. But that amiable and very gallant soldier began to decline as the others rallied. With proper nourishment the gangrenous poisons that had lain dormant in his starved system revived and made immediate surgery necessary. His wasted frame was unequal to the shock, and he died in Godhavn harbour sixteen days after the rescue had been effected.

Six came back of the five and twenty who had set up camp at Fort Conger three years before. ◆

The six who survived, Brainard and Greely (with beard) seated, on board the rescue ship "Thetis," July 1884.
U.S. Signal Corps

All American photos from the National Archives

N.F.B. photographs by Rosemary Gilliat

LAND OF THE LIVELY ARTS

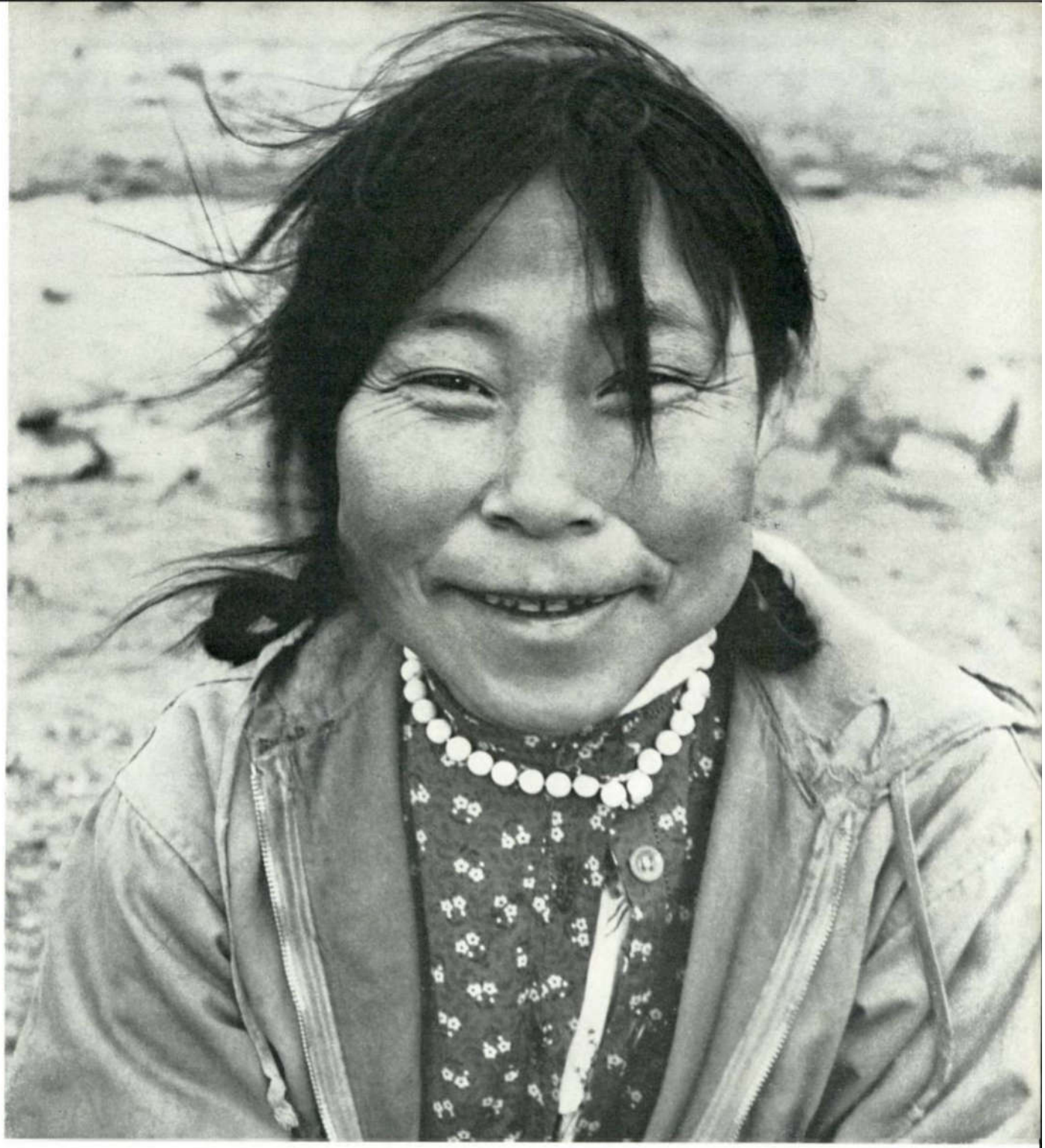
by Irene Baird

WE have been hearing a lot about Eskimo art since the 1960 collection of Cape Dorset graphics went on display this spring. For this fresh field of Eskimo creativeness has produced some of the liveliest and most original work to brighten Canada's creative horizons in many a day.

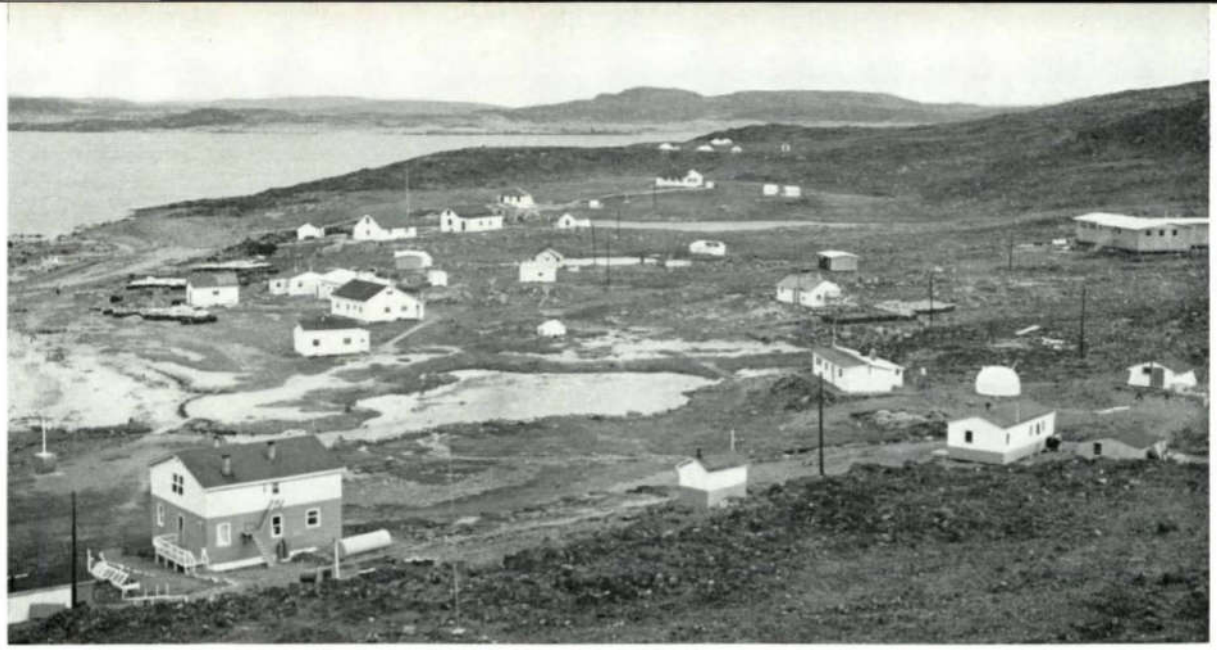
The Eskimo people have not yet exerted their privilege, as Canadians, of lamenting how uncultured they are, how unproductive in the creative arts. Life in the Arctic does not leave much time for introspection. You are either alive or you are the other thing. And until the quite recent past the Eskimos have not had too many stop-over points in between these two rather extreme states. The terrain their talent springs from tends to make an artist ignore a good many non-essentials and concentrate on what he wants to say. This is the kind of setting that creates the characteristic all art must have if it is to communicate at all—impact.

Whether a piece of graphic art—or a soapstone carving—is technically excellent or just modestly good is for the judgment of experts. (And of course everyone has the right to be his own expert.) The one quality that a non-expert can safely lay hands on and feel secure about in any judgment of art is impact—the compelling sense of life lived, of some universal flash of experience conveyed. The veriest layman knows whether or not a piece of creative work excites him or leaves his heart cold. This is perhaps as far as non-professional judgment should be expected to go—or need ever go. Impact of this order is really a sense of mutual recognition between the artist and the outside world. The world that can so often feel to him so far away—and not in the geographic sense.

In the case of Eskimo art it is recognition between two very unlikely worlds—the lonely tundra and the highly polished corridors of international art. For before the



Sheowak's delightful sense of humour comes to the fore in her sealskin print "The Pot Spirits" on the opposite page and "Ringed Seal" here. This talented artist died earlier in the year of influenza.



The Eskimo settlement at Cape Dorset, the art centre at right beside the plastic igloo.

graphic art had appeared at all, Eskimo carvings already ranked among the most popular exhibits Canadians had seen or sent abroad.

The first small experimental collection of stone-cuts and seal-skins prints was exhibited at the Stratford Shakespearean Festival in Ontario in 1959.

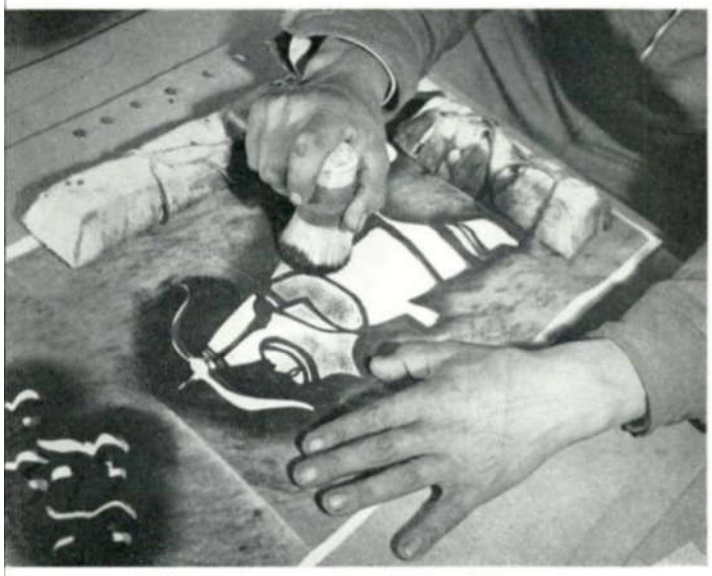
Its reception exceeded even the best hopes of those who had worked with the Eskimos to bring the prints out of the Arctic. It surpassed anything the artists themselves could have imagined. Almost overnight Eskimo graphic art began to move into the select company of collectors' items. It had something new to say. People stopped to find out what it was.

Although the artists were using paint and paper for the first time, their work betrayed no trace of hesitancy or amateurishness. Its impact was as direct and telling as a tossed harpoon. It met the same response from those who knew art as from those who simply knew what they liked. That first year the Cape Dorset graphics became part of the permanent collections of the National Gallery of Canada, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and many other galleries.

In the art centre at Cape Dorset prints are made from sealskin stencils or stone blocks.

None of this, needless to say, came about because people considered the work of the artists merely novel or quaint. Galleries and art dealers do not spend their money for such reason. Nor do serious private collectors.

Unlike artists who at first must be content with a *succès d'estime* the West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative, to which the artists belong, has combined talent with a profit. Sale of the 1959 collection realized $20,000—enough to enable the Co-op. to pay a handsome sum for art work, buy fresh stocks of art supplies, and invest in

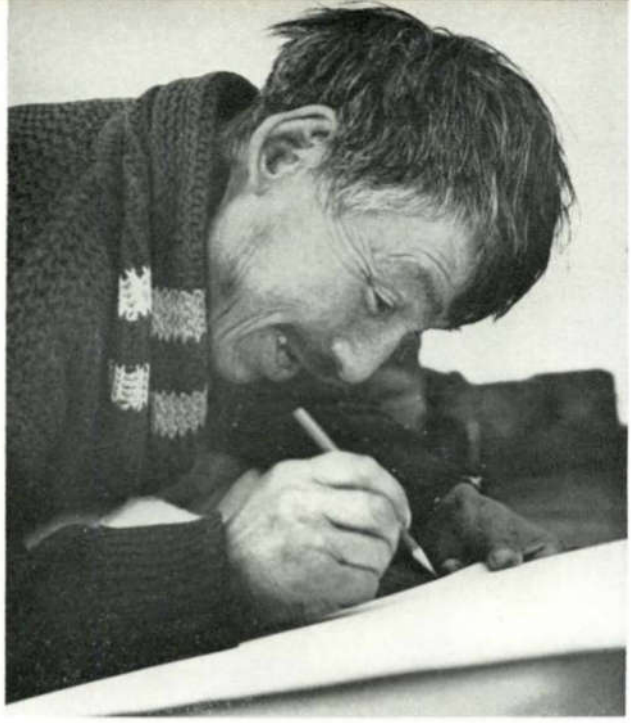


Iyola stipples paint through stencil to print "The Archer" (right) by Niviaksiak, the hunter who died while after a polar bear.

new hunting and trapping equipment. An up-and-coming group, it recently engaged a young Vancouver artist, Terence Ryan, a graduate of the Ontario College of Art, to act as business manager. Ryan, who worked at Cape Dorset in the summer of 1960, is one of the first Canadians from the south to go to work for the Eskimos.

About 300 Eskimos live in the Dorset area on the south coast of Baffin Island. The Northern Affairs Area Administrator is James Houston and few Canadians interested in Eskimo art need to be reminded of the contribution that he—and his wife—are making to its development. Only a man who himself paints could do as much.

Cape Dorset was the logical place for a new Eskimo art form to develop. The region includes some of the most talented carvers in the Arctic and it was here that the mace of the Northwest Territories was made, an elab-



Kiakshuk, aged 72, both carves and draws. His "Singing Women Sew Kayak" (below) is a stonecut.

orate piece of work in copper, bone, wood, and ivory. (See *Beaver* Winter 1955). It was not hard to interest such a community in broadening its creative range.

One of the encouraging things about the Eskimos is that they are people who enjoy experiment. If they had not been of this temperament they would not have risked trying their hands with paint and paper, media alien to their tradition.

Local talent found a focus in a small, carefully-designed Craft Centre built by the Eskimos from plans and materials supplied by Northern Affairs. Here there was room to work—to meet and compare one's work with that of others. Here too was some technical help at the early stages of print-making if one asked for it.

Kiakshuk's son, Luktak, who carved the stone, pulls a print of his father's design "Owl and Hare."

"Canada Goose Nesting," sealskin stencil by Mungitok.

The Dorset people are hunters and trappers. Their graphic art is an extension of their day-to-day life, in no sense a substitute for it. Most of the first sketches are done in the camps away from the main settlement. The sealskin stencils and stone blocks from which the limited editions of prints are taken are worked on by the flickering light of seal oil lamps or in the natural daylight of the summer tents.

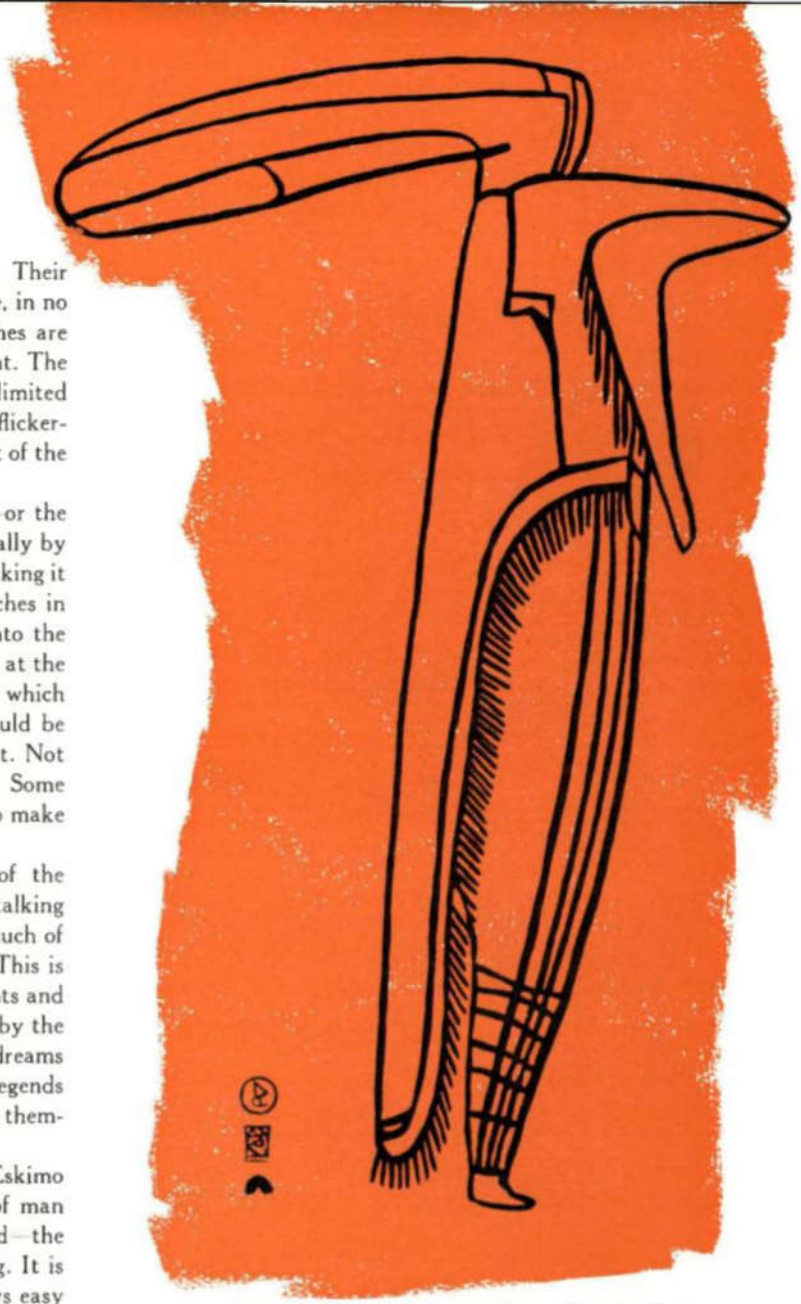
The hunter who has in mind to make a print—or the woman planning a sealskin stencil—starts off usually by obtaining a supply of paper from the Centre and taking it back to the camp to work out a few rough sketches in pencil or crayon. Then is a good time to drop into the Centre again so that other artists may take a look at the sketches and offer opinions. This is the stage at which the artist decides whether the finished print should be executed as a sealskin stencil or stone block print. Not all the Eskimos at the Centre are printmakers. Some prefer to carve in soapstone. Others are content to make only sketches.

Expression through paint and paper, some of the artists have discovered, may be more subtle than talking through the traditional stone and bone. And so much of their new work expresses more subtle meanings. This is the most striking difference between the 1960 prints and the first collection—this and a gain in confidence by the artists. They have begun to reach back into their dreams and fears, their joys and perplexities, into the old legends and folk tales; to express things that even they themselves cannot fully explain.

Like every race that lives close to nature the Eskimo people have a streak of mysticism. For the life of man and of the wild creatures, of weather and the land—the world of the Arctic itself—is strange and puzzling. It is filled with mysteries. These feelings are not always easy to express even to one's friends; they are not always understood even by those who have them. But the motions of brush or crayon are a way to talk that flows, that encourages freer expression.

And so many of the new prints have an eerie mysticism. The artists have reached back and drawn on reserves that lie below the level of mere observation. The pictures are strange because life is strange. And in much of their work—even when it is telling of serious things—are bright escaping flashes of humour, a joyful sense of the comic. There is no difference in the level of talent between men and women. Half the artists this year are women; their work is some of the most subtle and original.

To make a sealskin stencil the design is transferred to a piece of sealskin and cut out. Then it is placed on a sheet of paper and colour brushed into the openings.



Stonecut "Inland Eskimo Woman" is by Una, a woman from the Kazan River region.

This technique produces a print with a definite texture yet allows the artist to express an image in a variety of subtle shades and tones.

A stone cut requires the flattening and polishing of a large slab of soapstone. The design is transferred to the surface of the stone and cut out in low relief. This stone cut is delicately inked and a sheet of fine paper placed on the surface. By gently rubbing the paper with the fingers or a small tampon the image is transferred to the paper. The effect is sensitive, seeming to reveal more of the artist's intent than any mechanical process.

Prints are signed by the artist and printmaker, and bear the register of the Canadian Eskimo Art symbol.

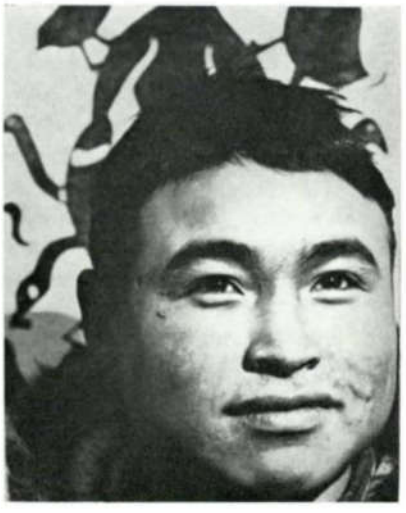
"Canada Geese in Summer"
Stonecut by Simionie.

lems—as any lively young art ought to do. The biggest of these at present is to get enough of it. Twenty-three artists were represented in the 1960 collection and individual subjects rose from 41 to 70, an increase more than offset by the rise in demand. Some subjects sold out

Young Mary Pitseolak, above, created "Perils of the Sea Traveller," a stonecut. Background colour of the prints illustrated is not always that of the original.

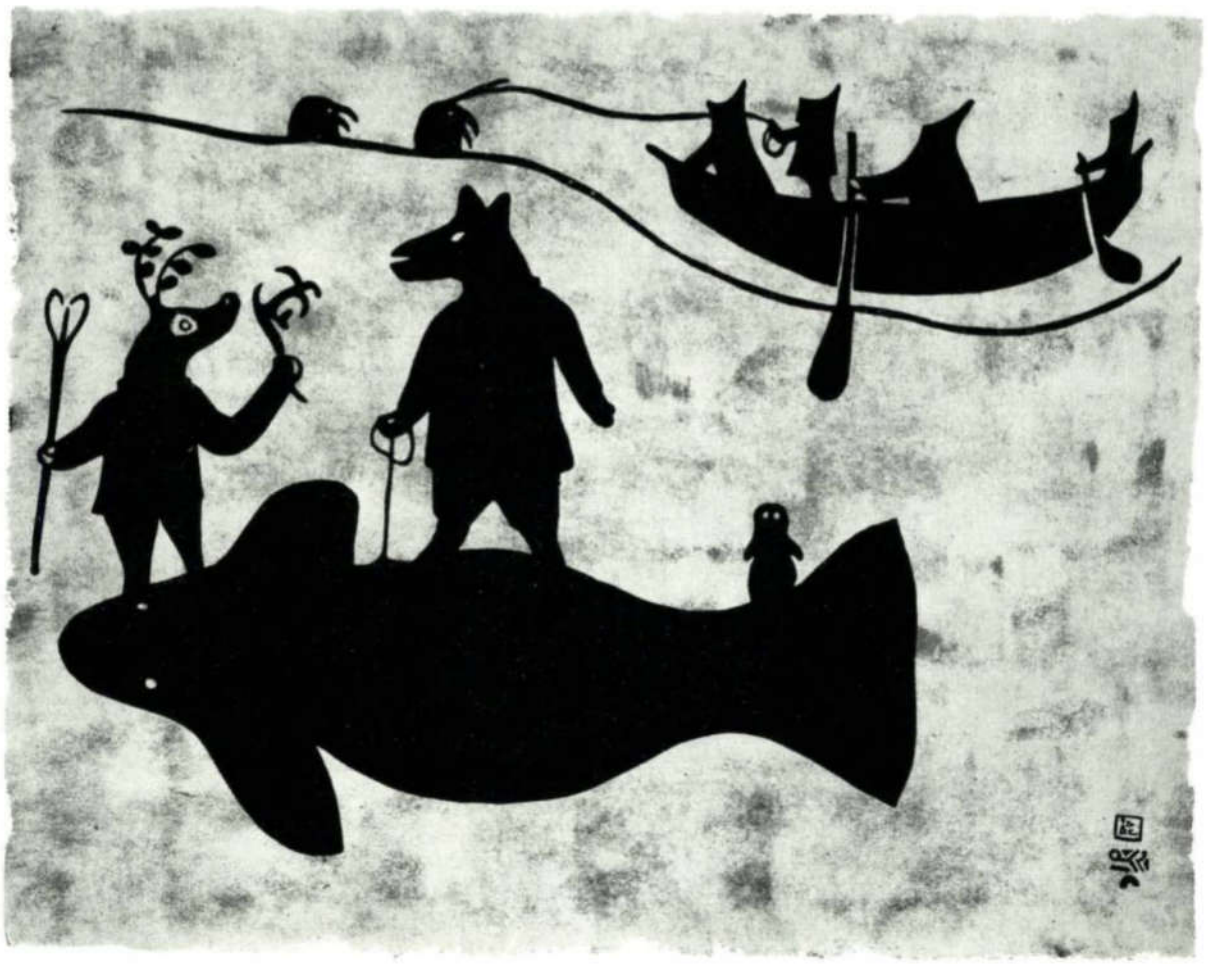
Prints are consigned to the Industrial Division in Ottawa, which works with two voluntary committees of experts to appraise and set a value on them. A catalogue is prepared and mailed to leading galleries, museums, and arts dealers giving each an equal opportunity to buy.

Recognition has come so fast to the Cape Dorset graphics that it has created a series of interesting prob-



Twenty-five year old Mungitok.

Nepachee sews a beadwork belt in her tent but her mind may be working on the fantasies she creates in her designs, like the stonecut below, "Eskimo Sea Dreams."

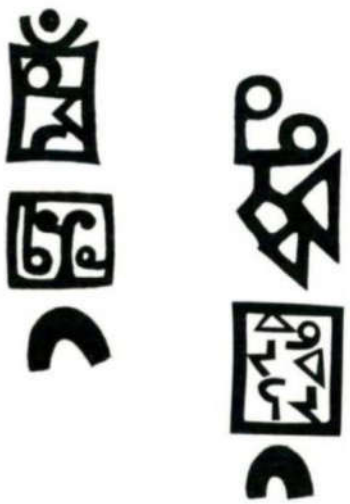


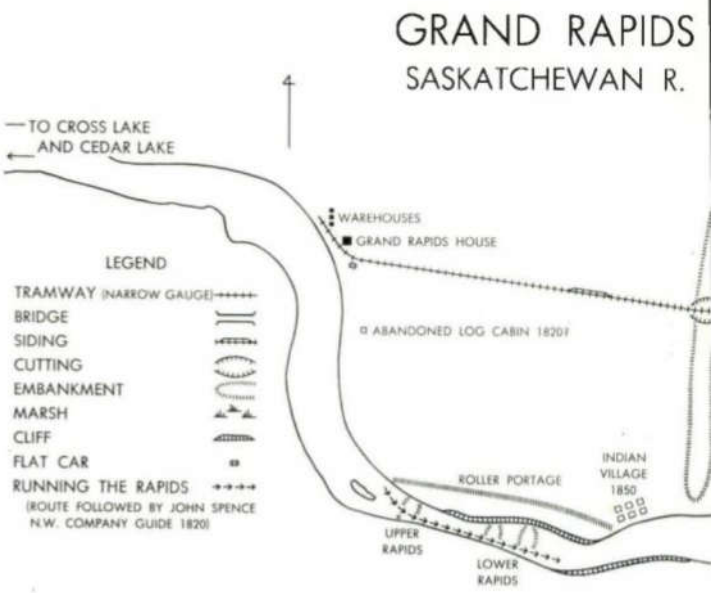
"Geese Frightened by Fox" is a stonecut by Kenojuak whose flowing, imaginative designs are distinctive. Kenojuack in her tent, tending her seal-oil lamp, is shown on cover.

almost as soon as they went on exhibition. The extent to which demand outstrips supply is a problem that time will only partially solve. But this is the way with all work worth owning.

The West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative was $63,000 richer through the work of its artist members in 1960, rather more than three times the amount realised by the first collection. Occasionally one hears it said that the Eskimos may become spoilt by receiving a financial return for their art—that they should be satisfied to create for creativeness' sake. It will, I think, be time for them to adopt this high-minded approach to the fruits of their work when the rest of us adopt it too.

The Cape Dorset people are pleased—though not carried away—by their fame. Pleased that an art form they still regard mainly as a creative pleasure should have found favour with so many people outside the Arctic and had such a satisfactory effect on the local economy. This is a small and talented Eskimo community enjoying its success. ♦





BY RON VASTOKAS

THE GRAND

BY 1964, with the completion of the Grand Rapids dam, a long chapter in Canadian history will close, and the portage through which explorers and fur traders surged into the heart of the continent, will have become the bottom of a man-made lake.

Before it empties into the northern part of Lake Winnipeg, the Saskatchewan River descends more than seventy feet. About two miles from its mouth is the sharp drop of the Grand Rapids. Here, making a crescent-shaped swing, the river flows between high vertical cliffs of limestone, carrying the waters drained from the area between the watersheds of the Missouri and the Athabasca Rivers stretching for a thousand miles to the foot of the Rockies. The river drops, to quote recent figures of the Manitoba Hydro, 74.2 feet in four miles, with a total drop in the twelve miles between Cross Lake and Lake Winnipeg of 128 feet.

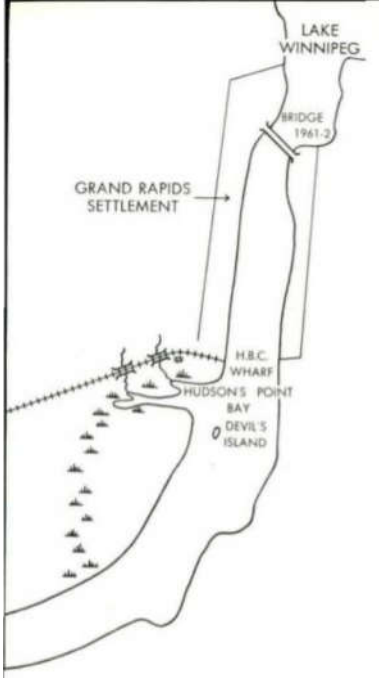
That the river was in use long before the coming of the fur traders is indicated by the number of archaeological sites of considerable antiquity that have recently been found in the vicinity of Grand Rapids. Indian settlements of a later date have been ascertained on Hudson's Bay Point, and these continued into historic times. John McLean in 1833 passed the portage ". . . assisted by the natives—Sauteux, Crees, and half-breeds" who, he observed, "live luxuriously on sturgeon, with little toil."

Neither Kelsey nor Henday portaged the Grand Rapids on their journeys inland, passing the head of Lake Winnipeg along the River Minago route, but the news that Henday brought to James Isham at York Factory in 1755 of French competition was cause for alarm. Their "Birch rind canoes," Henday reported, "will carry as much as an India Ship's Long-boat . . . and so light that two men can carry one several miles with ease. . . . The French talk Several Languages to perfection; they have the advantage of us in every shape; and if they had Brazile tobacco, which they have not, would entirely cut off our trade." By 1754 La Vérendrye had two posts on routes to York Factory, Pasquia or Basquia (The Pas), and Fort Bourbon on Cedar Lake, but though the threat was felt, no inland H B C posts were established for twenty years. Joseph Smith and Joseph Waggoner, however, travelled inland from York in 1756, found the French post at Cedar Lake empty, and continued south and east to winter by the Assiniboine and returned by Swan River. In the following years missions with presents were sent out annually in efforts to lead the Indians back to the Bay to trade.

But such a policy could not long be maintained after the Peace of Paris in 1763 opened the doors to the West for British traders from Montreal. By 1771, Thomas Corry, one of the "Pedlars," as the traders from Canada were called, had built a trading house on Cedar Lake to intercept the Indian brigades on their way to Hudson Bay. His success was such that the returns at York Factory that year were one-third less than the harvest of 29,507 "made Beaver" in 1741. When finally the faithful Cree brigades began to diminish, Andrew Graham, Master at Severn, dispatched, in 1774, Hearne and a party of ten "in the same manner as the Canadian Pedlars, in large Birch Rind Canoes" to establish the first inland post at Cumberland House on the Saskatchewan, where they could meet their rivals face to face.

Alexander Henry, of the Quebec fur-trade partnership, on his way to Beaver Lake in 1775, has left the first extensive account of Grand Rapids. "On the first of October, we gained the mouth of the River de Bourbon, Pasquayah or Sascatchiwaine and proceeded to ascend its stream. . . . Our course, from the entrance of Lake Winipegon, was north-west northerly. . . . At four leagues above the mouth of the river, is the Grand Rapide, two leagues in length, up which the canoes are dragged with

Mr. Vastokas, who is doing graduate work in anthropology at the University of Toronto has spent several seasons at archaeological sites, including Grand Rapids. Photos by the author unless credited.



The house of the Hudson's Bay Company at Grand Rapids in 1890.
Geological Survey

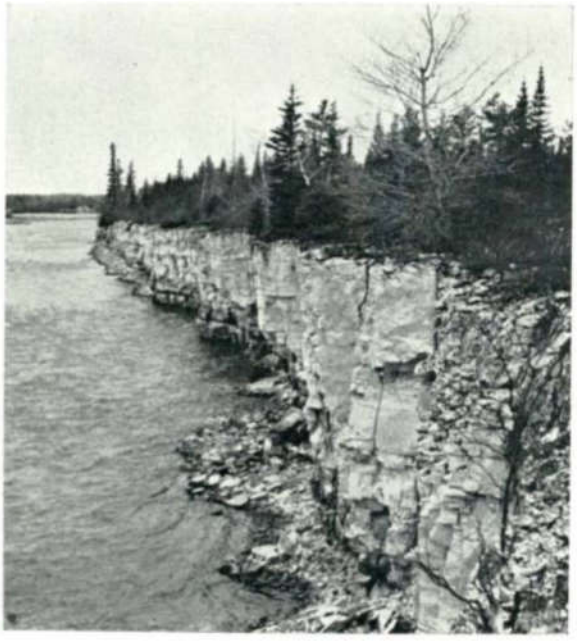
RAPIDS PORTAGE

ropes. At the end of this is a carrying-place of two miles, through a forest almost uniformly of pine-trees. Here, we met with Indians, fishing for sturgeon. Their practice is, to watch behind the points where the current forms an eddy, in which the sturgeon, coming to rest themselves, are easily speared."

Though the descent of the river is gradual, the rapids are extremely turbulent and fast, and shooting them was a risky business. "On reaching the carrying-place," relates Philip Turnor, returning in 1779 from Cumberland House, ". . . some of the Indians, thinking the S° side of the Fall the best to Shoot, crossed about ½ Mile below the carrying place, M' Joseph Hansom in attempting to follow them was drove upon a Stone in the middle of the fall the Canoe oversett and he drowned, . . . an Indian likewise in attempting to cross was overset by the swell and drowned, . . . at 1½ PM we Intered M' Hansom upon a Point on the N° side the River in the most Christian like maner we could, the Indian not found. . . ."

Before the development of the York boat, the northern freight canoe was the means of transportation, and

High limestone cliffs on the north side of Grand Rapids.



To provide a level road for the tramway a cut had to be made through an old beach line.

Ties were axe-hewn, rails

The horse-drawn cars attracted tourists. HBC

The remains of an old car, last year.

though it carried but twenty-five to thirty "pieces," of ninety pounds each, and lasted only two years, it was fast and easily portaged; it was retained by the North Westers until their coalition with the H B C. The York boat was extremely heavy and difficult to portage, but could carry four times as much as a canoe and was safe and sturdy.

The practice generally adopted by the Nor'Westers in coming down the rapids was to deposit half their freight at the head of the carrying place, shoot the canoe down the south channel, and then reload at the foot.

On surveying the rapids for the first time, in 1808, Alexander Henry, the younger, observed: "I did not find them nearly so bad as I had been given to understand. There is no particular fall, but a succession of descents, especially on the S. side, where I would not hesitate a moment to run down a canoe with half her cargo."

To overcome the difficulties of hauling the bulky boats over the rough terrain of the portage, Thomas Holmes and Edward Umfreville in the 1780s laid down green logs across the path in order to allow the crews to "track" their heavy craft on rollers. This did little to lessen the growing tension between the rival companies, and Alexander Henry, the younger, remarked that the portage "would be a very good road, were it not that the H.B.Co. from York Factory, with large boats, are in the habit of laying down a succession of logs from one end to the other for the purpose of rolling their boats over. This is a nuisance to our people, frequently causing accidents which endanger their lives."

attached by lipped spikes.

Abandoned tramway wheels above the head of the portage where the Saskatchewan curves westward.

Ill relations increased, and after a skirmish at Seven Oaks and continual North West Company interference with Selkirk's settlements, Governor William Williams decided to deliver his rivals a mortal blow at Grand Rapids where he was certain to get them on their return from the northwest. Stationing himself at the foot of the rapids, Williams trained his cannon on the landing place where the canoes put ashore to reload, while his de Meuron soldiers were sent up the rapids to capture those who were portaging. Through the month of June 1819, Williams collected the North West Company's brigades as they shot down the rapids, imprisoning them temporarily on Devil's Island at the mouth of the river.

Such high-handedness infuriated the Nor'Westers, and after hearing of Benjamin Frobisher's death in his attempted escape from York Factory, they retaliated in a like manner the following year, at the same portage, by capturing the Hudson's Bay Company's brigades.

It was obvious that union was imperative for the survival of both Companies, and in 1821 their vast trans-

Bridge construction at Grand Rapids early this year. *Manitoba Archives*

port systems converged on York Factory under the ensign of the Hudson's Bay Company after the amalgamation had been effected.

Norway House, standing on the line of communication between York Factory and the inland posts, now assumed great importance, especially after the Council of 1831 directed that it become the depot for the Athabasca and Mackenzie "outfits."

The Red River Brigade, with a load of country produce, buffalo provisions and trading goods would depart early in the season from Fort Garry to Norway House. Taking on the northern "outfit" that had been shipped from London the previous summer, the Brigade then set out along the Saskatchewan for Cumberland House, the Churchill River, and Portage La Loche. There they met the Athabasca Brigade about the first of August to exchange the "outfit" for furs from the east of the Rockies. Late in the fall, the brigades returned to the settlement, having deposited the furs at York Factory and brought a new "outfit" down to Norway House. In five months they had covered something like 3,000 miles.

The Swan River Brigade, on the other hand, went north from Fort Pelly, carrying pemmican, along Lake Winnipegosis and across through Grand Rapids to Norway House. Most spectacular of all, however, was the Express Brigade which journeyed from Fort Vancouver to York Factory, and returned seven months later with mail and instructions for far western trade.

During the 1860s the efficiency of the York brigades began to crumble; capable men were scarce or unwilling to make the trip. In 1863 an epidemic struck the York brigade at Norway House, and in 1865 the Mackenzie brigades failed, one getting lost en route.

Meanwhile, a number of railways had reached Minnesota, and the steamboat *Anson Northup* successfully docked at Fort Garry. It was time for Governor Northcote to reconsider the Company's policy.

The Manitoba Free Press reported on 9 June 1877: "It is well known that during the past few years the Hudson's Bay Company found it advantageous to put steamers on Lake Winnipeg and the Red and Saskatchewan Rivers for their own trade and expended very large amounts on that service. They had to contend with many obstructions in navigating those rivers over the long stretch of water communication between Winnipeg and Fort Edmonton, the most serious of which is Grand Rapids, near the mouth of the Saskatchewan river; and we learn the Hudson's Bay Company have found it not undesirable to improve the means of transporting their freight for the interior across the portage that has been made there."

In 1877 the Hudson's Bay Company steamer *Colvile* carried up Lake Winnipeg to Grand Rapids fifty-five tons of iron rail from the United States, and construction on a narrow gauge railway was immediately begun under the engineer and explorer Walter Moberly. Two twenty-five-foot bridges were built, and a cutting, at times ten feet deep, was made through an old beach line. The three-and-a-half mile track laid through the bush took the place of the longer and hazardous water route.

"In the spring (of 1876)," writes Moberly in his autobiography, "I took a contract to build a tramway for the Hudson's Bay Company, over the portage at Grand Rapids, on the Saskatchewan River. Lord and Lady Dufferin paid a visit to this spot, and I took the opportunity of having the last spike driven by Lady Dufferin: it was also the first spike, though on a very small railway, driven in the Canadian Northwest."

Reporting on the vice-regal visit of 11 September 1877, the *Free Press* wrote: "Across this [tramway] the party were conducted in a truck very handsomely decorated for the occasion. About a mile and half of the track has not yet been finished and across this portion of the journey their Excellencies were taken in waggons. . . . On arrival at the termination of the portage the party was taken over the New Steel Steamer [the *Lily*], which has lately been brought out from England in sections. . . ."

By 1878, according to John Macoun, there were seventeen steamers on Manitoba waterways. The Hudson's Bay Company's *Northcote* and the *Lily* above the Grand Rapids were the beginning of a regular line that carried settlers to Edmonton and Medicine Hat.

With four tramcars and a handcar, freighting across the portage went on continuously throughout the summer. The horse drawn cars hauled loads of six thousand pounds, their movements co-ordinated by what was the most northerly telephone line for years.

But, as the coming of the sternwheelers ended the glory of York Factory and Norway House, so the construction of the railway to the Bay, brought the importance of Grand Rapids to a close. All that was found by a traveller who walked the length of the portage in 1933 were dejected, forlorn and moss grown cars, with little gay flowers that peered out from between the rotting ties on which the tracks were laid. Now there is a fresh flurry of activity at Grand Rapids. The tramway decays, but a new road brings motor traffic; canoe and York boat have gone, but aeroplane and ship carry men and materiel to the busy settlement as work on bridge and dam progresses. But when their work is done, the water will rise over the portage and the Grand Rapids will be seen no more. ◆

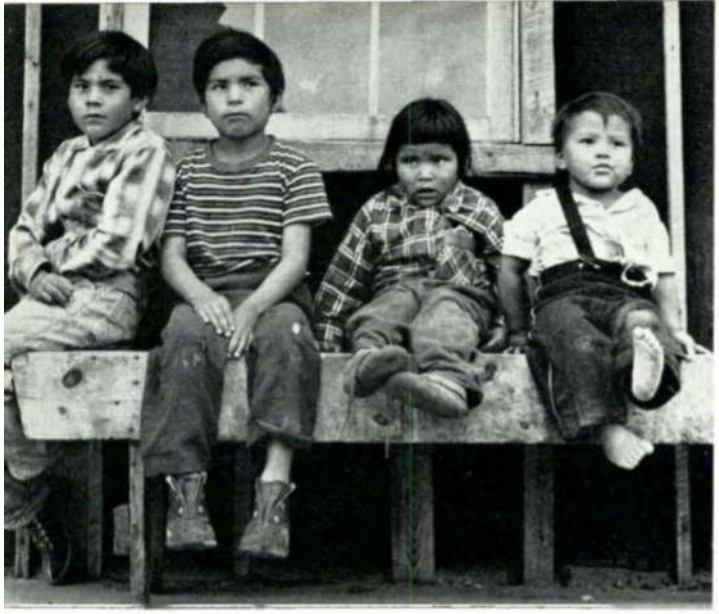
BARRIERE INDIANS

Pictures and story by Leonard Lee Rue III

LINGERING in the memories of the oldest men are the stories that their people had told them of the southward migration of their tribe from the area around Hudson Bay. They are Indians of the southern Cree, who call themselves Barrières, after the place where they finally settled, although the French call them the Tête-de-Boule. The Indians resent the name Tête-de-Boule, which they translate into "bullheaded" or "stubborn" rather than round-headed. They also resent the French word *sauvage* used for Indian because they claim a savage is a person who eats another person, and they regard cannibalism with horror.

The name Tête-de-Boule may not be flattering but they are very determined people who have, to a great extent, resisted the white man's influence. They live in the Quebec area of Cabonga Reservoir, where the Ottawa River after a swing to the west circles back to its source not far from the Gatineau. Although they are only some 200 miles north and slightly west of the city of Ottawa they

Noted nature photographer, Mr. Rue spends his summers in the wilds of the upper Ottawa River country.



Footwear of Barriere children may be rubber shoes, leather boots, moccasins, or nothing.

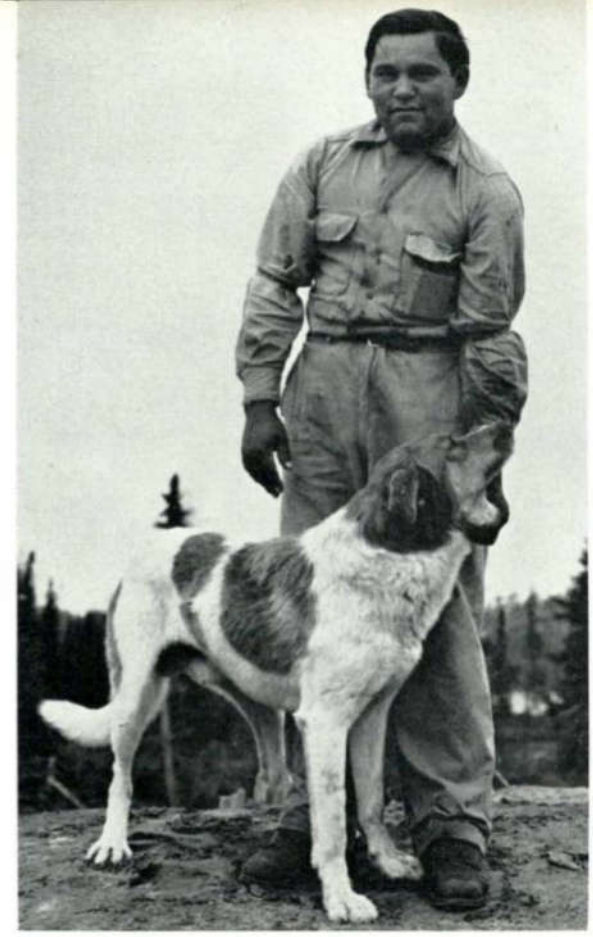
have been comparatively undisturbed and have retained a great deal of their culture and handicrafts.

Settling in an area that was claimed by the Algonquin Indians, the Tête-de-Boule were more or less adopted by that tribe and allowed to live there in peace. Being of the same linguistic root stock, the two tribes could speak to each other, although their actual words were slightly different. For example, the Algonquin word for beaver is *amik* while the Barrière word is *amisk*.

The Barrières are physically sturdy people, the average height of the men about five feet eight inches, the women slightly shorter. Their faces are broad with prominent cheekbones and their colouring is a dark red in contrast to the Algonquins who are much lighter. They have stocky squat figures and are well built although the women are inclined to be heavy. This does not detract from the women's desirability in Barrière social circles. A plump wife is good for a man's ego because it proves him to be a good provider and advertises that fact to the world. Their eyes are crow-black as is their hair. I have never seen a bald-headed Indian, in fact, their hair does not even seem to thin with age, although it does turn grey. The men do not have heavy beards but they do shave, as the age-old practice of plucking out each whisker has long since been abandoned.

In the summer time, the Barrières live a communal life, gathering in small groups of fifteen to twenty families. Formerly, these summer villages were usually in the vicinity of a Hudson's Bay trading post. Today, with the decline in price and demand for fur many of the smaller posts have been closed, forcing the Indians to deal elsewhere. They still gather together, however, for their summer encampment and a season of socializing.

In these encampments, the Indians live in cabins or tents, following their old ways. Women can be seen making moccasins, babies are still carried on cradle boards



Young Tete-de-Boule man with his sled dog.

(*tikinaguns*) and the men work on birch bark canoes, make paddles and other implements, or smoke moosehides. Children play underfoot everywhere and to add to the general confusion there are usually a dozen or more sled dogs wandering about.

Being hunters, the Barrières' main food is still meat and fish. They take game when it is available. They recognize no seasonal restrictions, for the laws are very liberal to the Indian who is fishing or hunting for his own use.

When one man kills a moose, all the people gather round and cut off all the meat they can carry. At that rate, it does not take long for a 1,400-pound moose to be consumed. Without refrigeration it is impossible to keep the meat from spoiling unless it is smoked. It is easier to share your catch today and eat part of someone else's catch tomorrow. When one man in the tribe eats well, they all eat well. When one man goes hungry, times are indeed dark because then everyone goes hungry.

The average yearly income for a Barrière family is considerably less than a thousand dollars. Whereas a few years ago the bulk of their income would come from fur trapping, declining prices have changed this. Government provision of family allowance, health and school service, have, however, helped to offset the loss. The men often work as guides for fishermen at about $8 a day in

Barriere matron and her baby at Rapide Lake.

A birch-bark canoe under construction.

the summer. Guiding for moose in the fall pays better, averaging about $15 a day, with the possibility of a bonus if the hunter is successful. Both men and women make articles of handicraft to be sold through the stores in Maniwaki to tourists. A few of the men may seek employment from the lumber companies.

Picking blueberries is one of the major sources of cash income. Berries were bringing $1.90 a peck basket, in the 1960 season, right out in the "bush," and the supply is practically inexhaustible. Much of their land has been cut over by the lumber companies for pulp wood. This opening up of the forest clears the way for the berries, which grow in profusion. One elderly white couple who were picking berries told me they averaged $1,500 for the two-month season, and the potential for the Indians was even greater because when they do pick, men, women, and children all turn out. But the Indians will not work very long at any particular job. They do not plan for the future, preferring to live on a day to day basis. This does not imply laziness, for they are not lazy. It is just that the Indian approach to life is different from ours. Who is to say which of us is right? I never heard of an Indian having a heart attack.

With the coming of cold weather, the various families pack all their belongings, children, and dogs into a couple of canoes or a boat and head into the back country to spend the winter.

Each family has a winter hunting and trapping ground which is held inviolate by the rest of the Indians. Here, they all live in log cabins on a rather permanent basis, although they may build a new cabin in another spot within their own territory if the trapping and hunting prospects appear better there. This is their central camp while the man of the family has several small cabins or huts to be used when he is running his circle of traps. The trap line may cover many miles and necessitate his being gone from the main camp for as much as a week at a time.

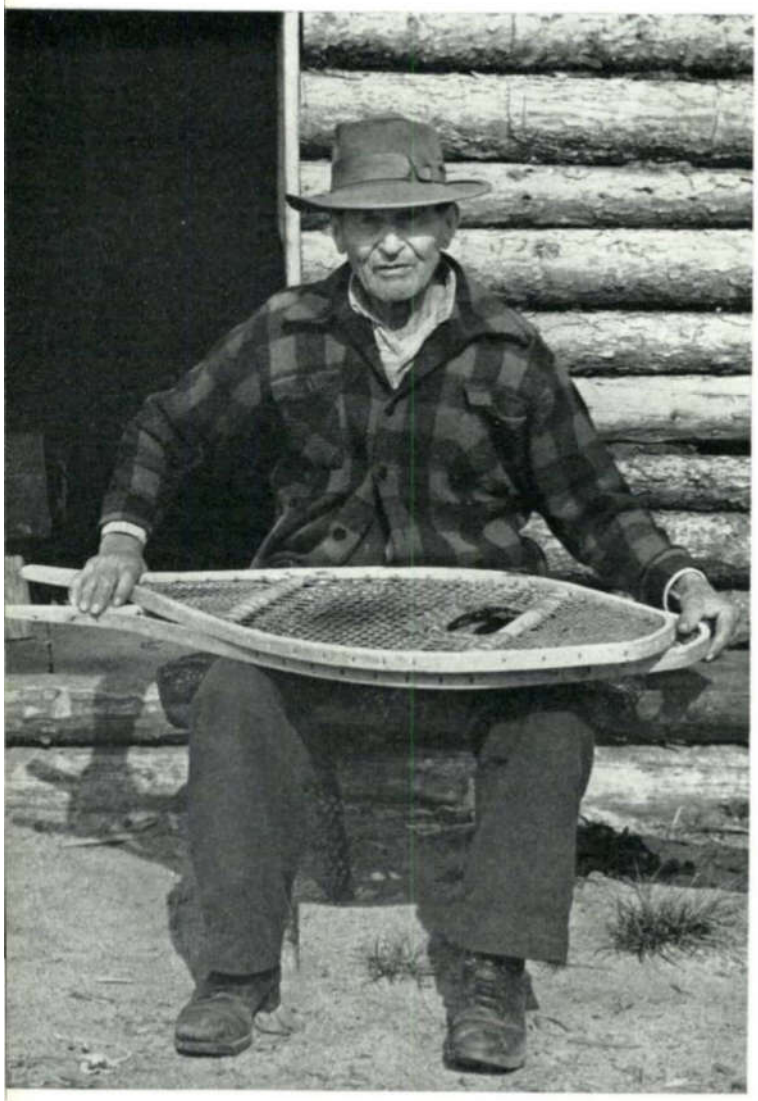
The cabins are snugly built of logs with the bark left on. They must provide protection against the rigours of a winter when the temperature may drop to 50 degrees below zero, and five or six feet of snow falls and drifts. Weathering and beetles shorten the life of the untreated logs to five or six years.

The Barrières' hunting today is done with guns as it has been by Indians for the more than 250 years that

The home of this family is an old lumber camp shack.

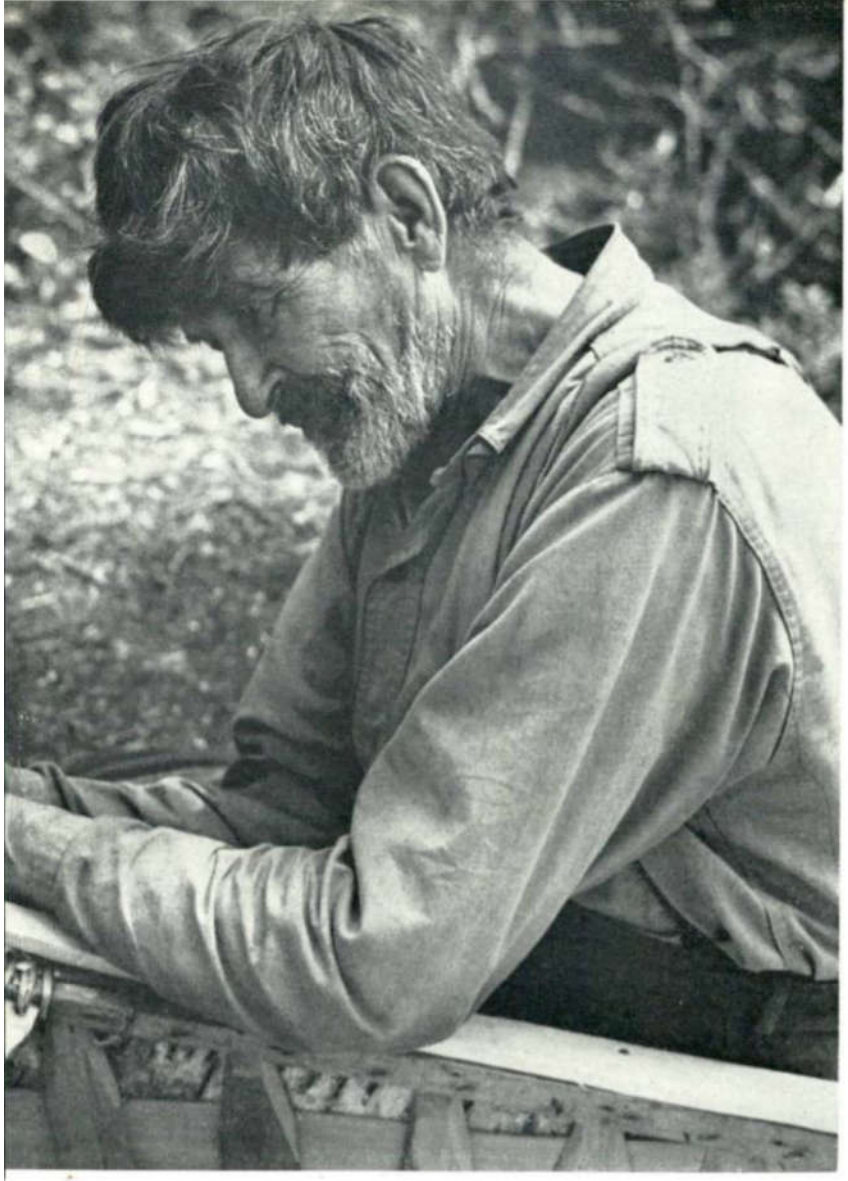
The old men carry on the traditional crafts of their people in the old way.

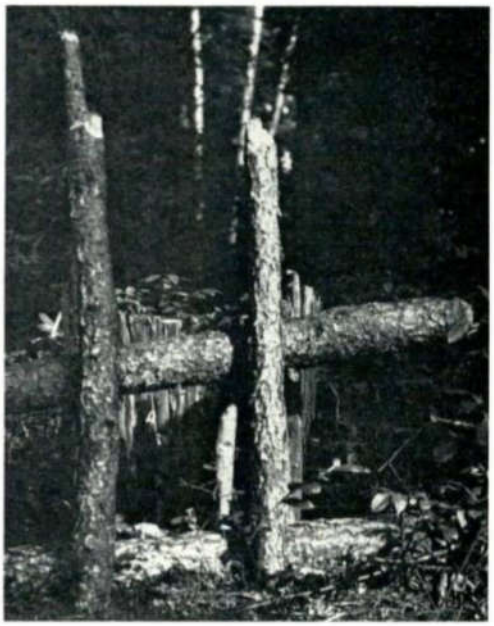
In making a canoe a most useful tool is the curved knife. This (on right) appears to be a home-made one, probably made from a file, tempered and filed down.



Charlie Smith, an Algonquin related to the Barriere chief by marriage, holds a pair of snowshoes made in the camp.

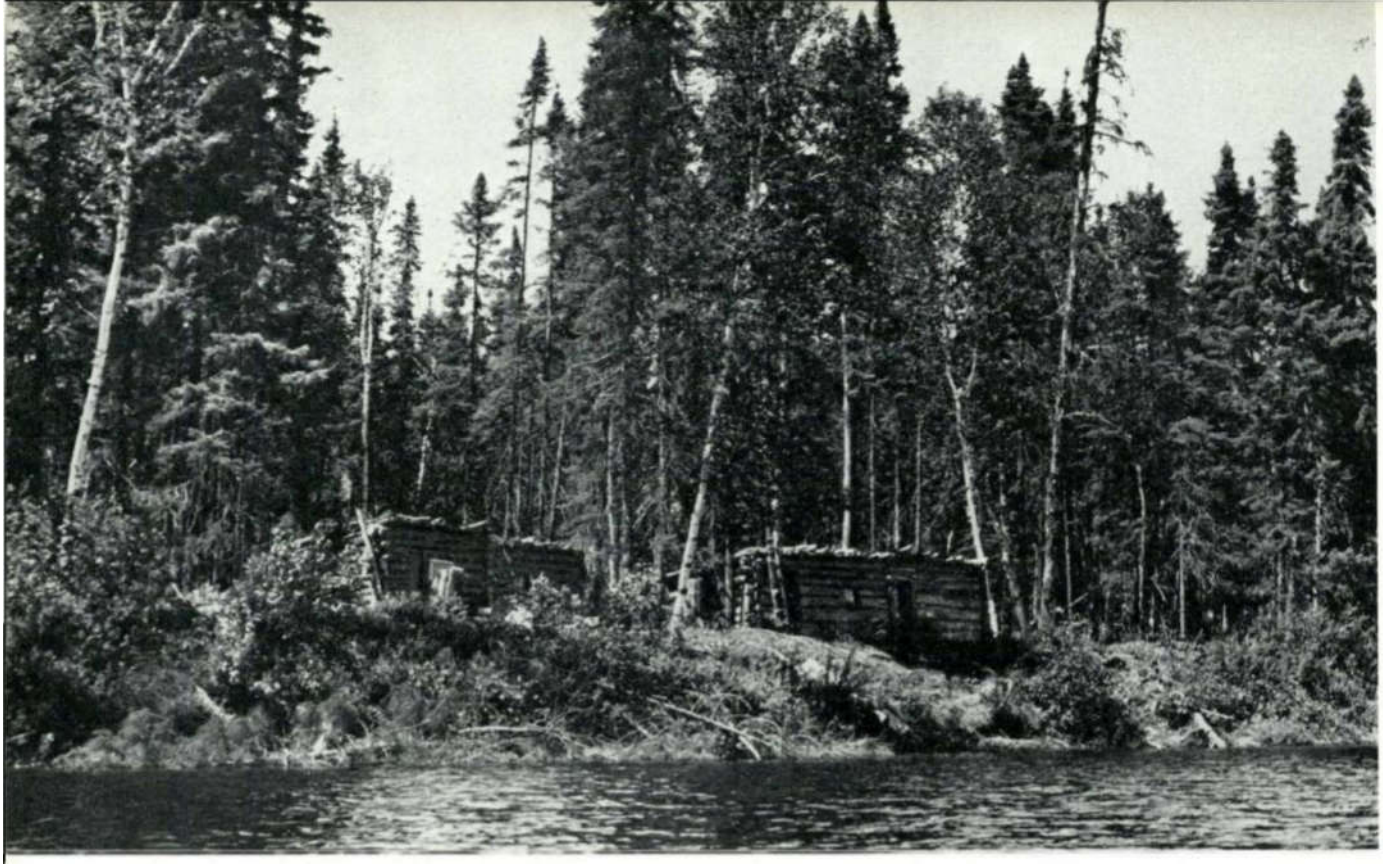
Sighting along a Barriere crossbow. There is no trigger and the string is released by pushing up with the trigger finger.



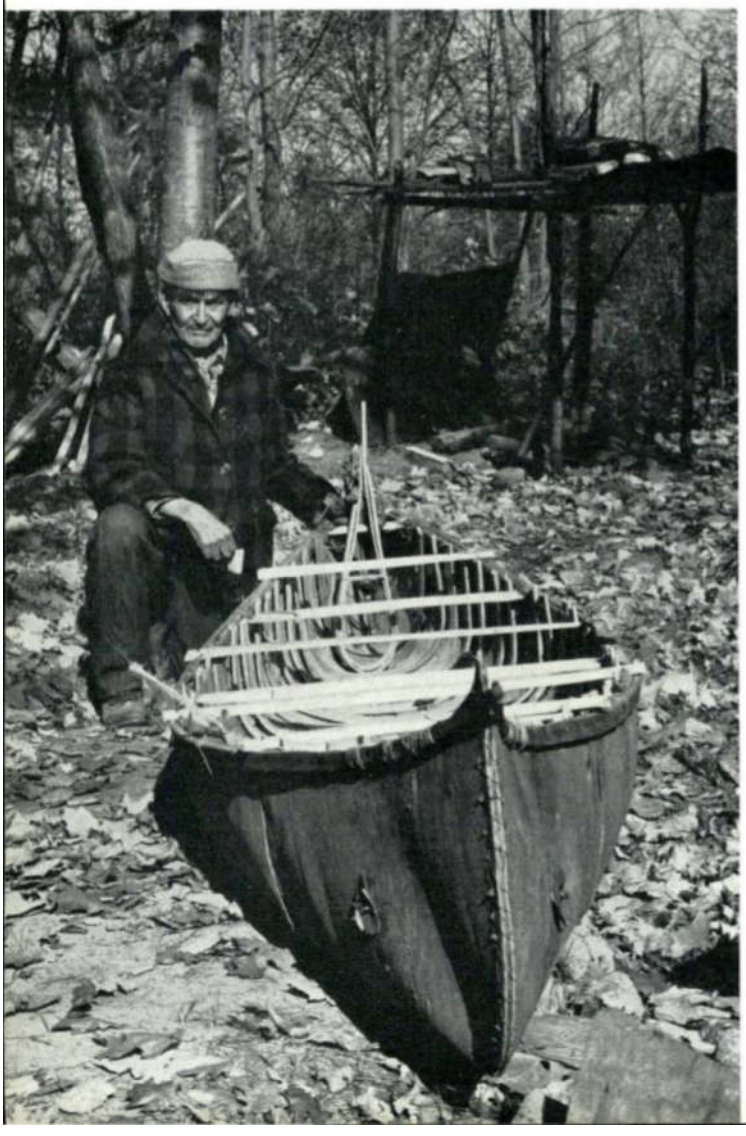


A deadfall trap for hares. It is baited with a string soaked in brine. When the hare chews it or pulls it off a peg a treadle releases the killing log.

Makakons, chief of the Barrieres, at the age of 86. He is making watap from the roots of the white spruce, to be used in sewing a canoe.



Three cabins of a Barriere winter camp on the upper Ottawa River.



they have been able to secure guns from the traders. They make bows and arrows for their children to use but do not add tips to the arrows. The only stone arrowhead I ever found in the upper Ottawa River region caused much excitement as the Indians had never seen such a thing. Possibly their ancestors more commonly used arrow points of bone. I have seen several cross-bows made and used by the Barrières for grouse and rabbit.

Almost all the trapping today is done with steel snares and traps although on occasion the time-honoured method of building deadfalls is employed. These are built in sizes for rabbit all the way up to bear.

The pride and joy of each man and his greatest crutch from civilization, after the gun, is his outboard motor, which greatly extends his range, and eases his travelling. It is practically a must in the Indian's life today and one of the very first purchases made when the money is available.

The women too have made concessions. An indispensable tool, and one found in almost every cabin, is the old treadle type of sewing machine. As the women make almost all of the clothing worn by the family, the sewing machine is used for both cloth and leather, although moccasin puckering and similar stitching must be done by hand.

The Barrières are a friendly people, much given to laughter. They have made me welcome when I was among them. I wish I had more time to spend with them. ◆

Charlie Smith completing a thirteen-foot birch-bark canoe.

Lieutenant Palmer makes a Survey

BY FRANK C. SWANNELL

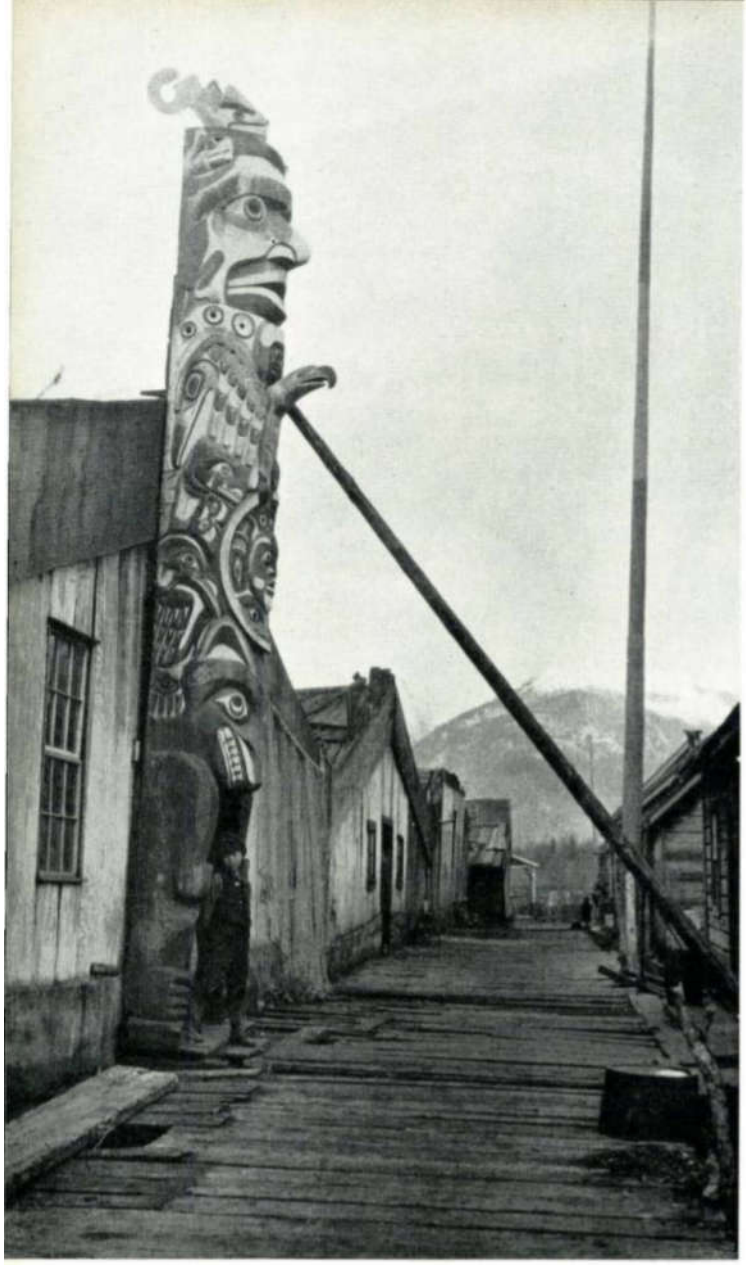
MY interest in Palmer began in 1925 when I was mapping the Bella Coola-Dean River region of British Columbia. My packer and I had had a strenuous day clambering down the gorge of Burnt Bridge Creek to the Bella Coola River, a 4,000 foot descent from the high plateau. Here in 1793 Sir Alexander Mackenzie had been hospitably received by the chief of the now vanished "Friendly Village." We were exhausted when, after dark, we reached the house of a settler who drove us to Wilkerson's near Canoe Crossing bridge. Our reception excelled Mackenzie's for hospitality, and next morning Chris Wilkerson showed us an old camp ground and a large cottonwood tree, which 63 years before had been faced smooth and "Palmer Camp 8" inscribed on it with a knife. We cut the slab out and it is now in the B.C. Archives.

In the Archives I found four long letters from Palmer to Colonel R. C. Moody. Full of interest, they show a cordial relationship between commanding officer and subaltern quite unlike the formal military progress report one might have expected. They give the personal touch to an expedition sent to report on a proposed wagon-road route from Bella Coola to the new-found gold fields of the Cariboo. The topographic and technical details were ably embodied in a later report of a "Journey of Survey from Victoria to Fort Alexander via North Bentinck Arm" by Lieut. H. Spencer Palmer of the Royal Engineers, printed at the Royal Engineer Press in New Westminster in 1863.

Miners had got as far up the Fraser as Quesnelle Forks (now Quesnel) in 1860 and at Rich Bar above Alexandria men were making as much as $60 a day. The year of the great rush, 1862, the declared value of the gold taken out of the Cariboo was $2,666,115 and some 6,000 miners had gone in, many on foot with packs on their backs. There was no wagon road, supplies being brought in by

Lieut. Henry Spencer Palmer B.C. Archives

F. C. Swannell, D.L.S., retired B.C. government surveyor, spent many years exploring the province.



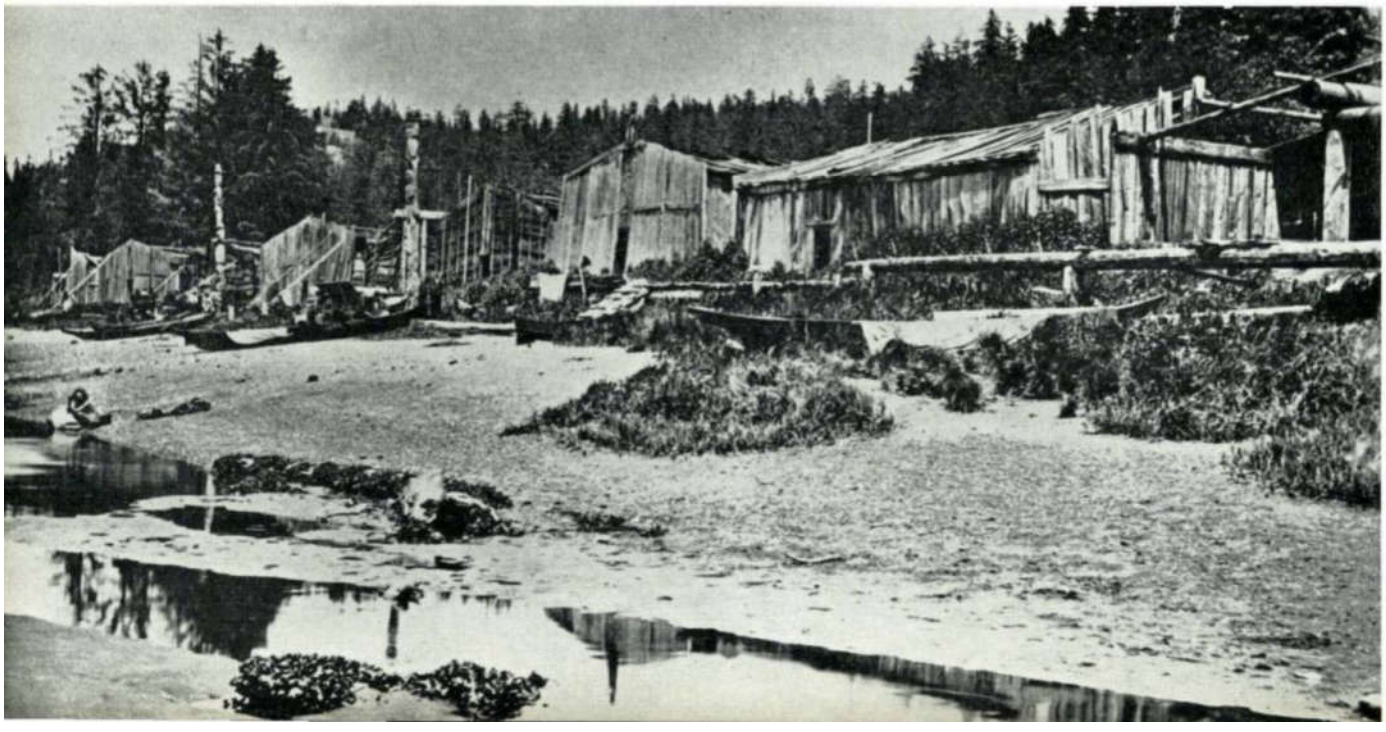
A fine house pole doorway fronts this street in Bella Coola in the 1890s.
B.C. Archives

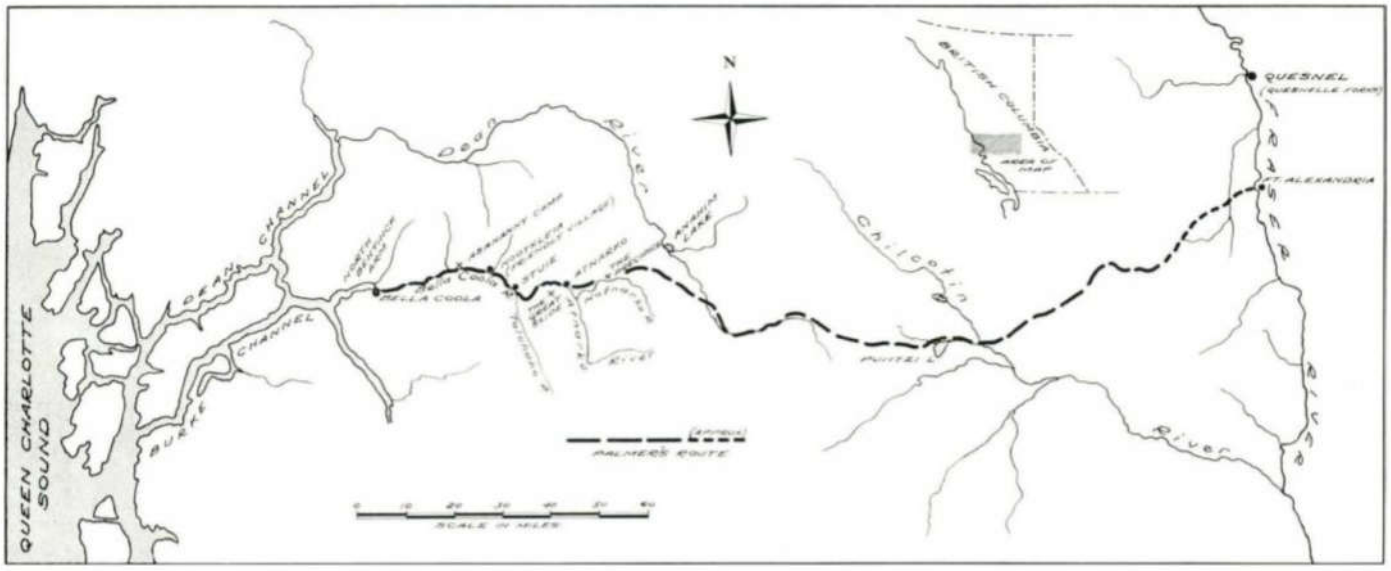
mule-trains of sixteen to forty-eight animals, with a packer to every eight mules. Each mule carried from 250 to 400 pounds up the H B C brigade trail from Yale to Boston Bar, thence by Indian trail. The journey to Quesnel took a month and the price of a pound of flour there went as high as one dollar. Palmer found men leaving the Cariboo every day for want of food and money, many being "cleaned out" before reaching pay-dirt. There were demands for a road for "there are not enough mules in the Colony to bring in over the miserable trails the necessary food and implements." The Royal Engineers were investigating the possibility of a route direct from the west coast east to the Cariboo. (The Bella Coola Road finally became a reality in 1955, see the *Beaver*, Summer 1957.)

Palmer was brought to Bella Coola on the H B C side-wheel paddle-steamer *Labouchère*. With him were Sappers Edwards and Breakenridge, Lt.-Col. Foster who was a member of the Legislative Assembly apparently attached for the trip with no specific duties, and an unnamed packer with eight horses.

After a week spent in investigating the possibilities of Bella Coola as a town-site and harbour Palmer started up river July 9th, 1862. His troubles commenced immediately; he took a week to reach his eighth camp only 16 miles upstream. Travel conditions in 1862 were tremendously different from ours by wagon-road in 1925. We found magnificent timber, often little underbrush, the road usually running far back from the river over firm ground. Palmer found an execrable Indian track that could hardly be dignified with the name of trail, following the sinuosities of a river full of islands and back-sloughs. The low, often swampy banks densely wooded with

A Bella Coola Indian village on South Bentinck Arm about 1875. *B.C. Archives*



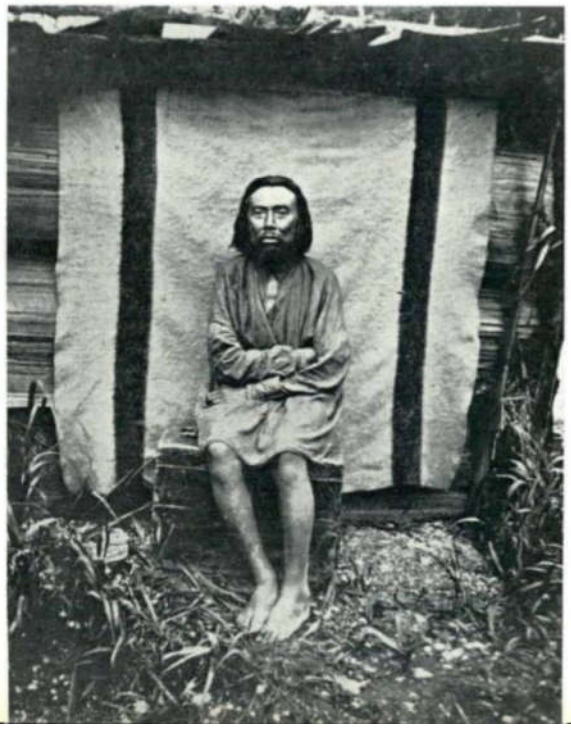


cottonwood, willow, dogwood and crab-apple, with dense thickets full of poisonous, prickly, "devil's club."

The foot trail was absolutely impassable for loaded pack horses, with no food except at deserted Indian village sites. All his baggage had to be carried by Indian canoe as far as Stuie 43 miles upstream. Above here vegetation was much less dense and white packers had improved the trail, which wound between "magnificent mountains with all the elements of grandeur imaginable, numberless waterfalls down their slope". Even on the improved trail it took Palmer six hours to make eight miles with loaded animals.

Now, there is only one village, and some 200 Indians living in the valley; then, there were over a dozen villages or lately deserted village-sites up as far as Atnarko. Palmer found Ko-om-ko-otz and two other villages at the river mouth with a total population he estimates at 1200.

Bella Coola man of the 1860s. *B.C. Archives*



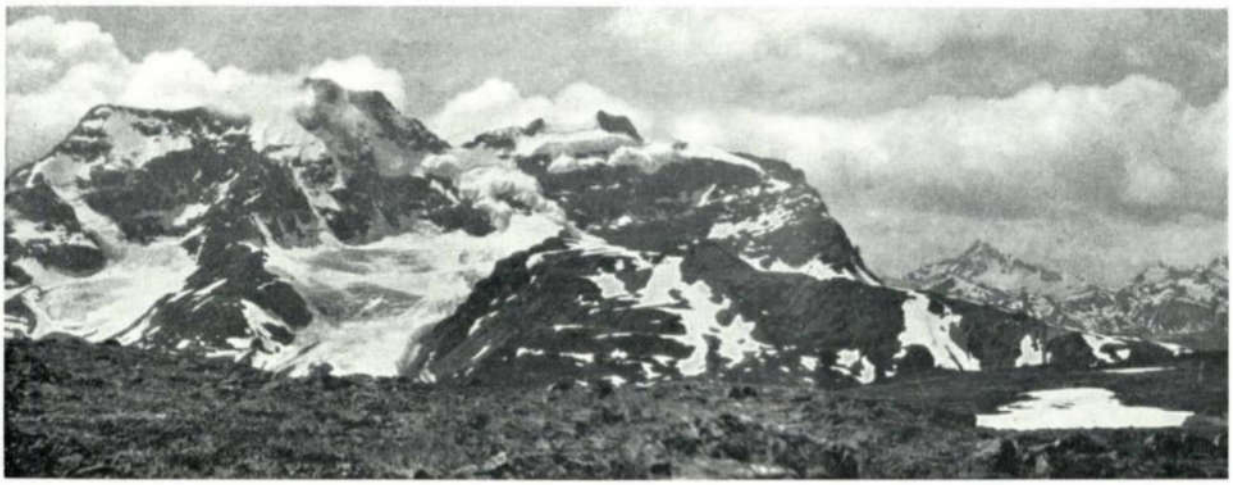
Villages which in 1862 "remain in their purely savage originality, unmodified by the touch of civilization—rude clusters of dwellings built of posts and huge rough slabs of cedar; some of the lodges being gaudily painted with strange devices prominent among which is the red hand, the Indian symbol of power."

"In moral character," wrote Palmer about the Bella Coolans, "they are degraded specimens of the red Indian. Prostitution, polygamy and other worse vices are of frequent occurrence. Thieving is an art all attain to perfection, and, in intercourse with them I had unpleasant opportunities of becoming acquainted with the incredulity, falsehood and avarice which form prominent traits of their character—owing to these habits, war with the Hydas, and smallpox, the race is rapidly approaching extermination."

Smallpox was rampant. Decimation is a word quite inadequate to express the death rate, which later was almost extinction. Palmer wrote that in the week of his arrival a sad quota of death had spread so rapidly that nearly all the healthy people had gone to encamp in the woods. Sick men and women were left, with a blanket and two or three salmon, to die. Sick children were tied to trees, and hideously painted, naked grey-headed medicine men howled and gesticulated night and day in front of the lodges. The Indians were attired in Hudson's Bay blankets and shirts and adorned with nose-rings and ear-rings. They had not yet been visited by missionaries.

He had the greatest admiration for their canoemanship and the unerring skill and nerve with which the heavily laden canoes, carrying his baggage, were propelled through dangers of no trifling description. He himself must have previously acquired some facility with the pole, for he says he made a trip for a malingering Indian "gone sick".

The river-canoe runs up to 25 feet in length, with 2½-foot beam, hollowed out of cottonwood with flat floors and sides nearly vertical from stem to stern, a form which facilitates the work of poling. On each of two platforms, at bow and stern, stood an Indian on whom the guidance of the canoe principally depended. Mackenzie's voyageurs in 1793 were equally impressed with the skill of the native canoemen.



Looking south across the Bella Coola valley, in the region of Palmer's Asananny Camp.

Swannell Coll., B.C. Archives

The most nearly fatal incident in Palmer's intercourse with the Indians was at Asananny Camp, six miles below Camp 8, where we found the inscription. Palmer's letter to his colonel dated 16th July, 1862 vitally portrays how narrowly he escaped being murdered there nearly a hundred years ago:

"As for the Indians, I can only say they are the most extortionate, inconsistent, thieving rascals I ever saw. The man who christened Bella Coola 'Rascals' Village' [Alexander Mackenzie] ought to be remembered by posterity as a discerning gentleman. The beggars have an insatiable affection for pannikins, knives, etc. . . . one of them stole the inverting eyepiece of the theodolite. I hope to goodness he will be frightened when he sees the world upside down. As it is, they think that, when I am observing with the sextant, I am having a *cloche nanitch* at the *sockallytihe* (good look at God), to find out if the smallpox is going to be bad. Poor creatures, they are dying and rotting away by the score, and it is no uncommon occurrence to come across dead bodies lying in the bush. They have now dispersed from the villages, but it seems to be spreading through the valley. . . . I had a row with them a few days ago. On ordering them away from the camp, they refused to go. I pushed one who raised his knife. I got my revolver and menaced him and Edwards ditto. An *émeute* ensued—half-a-dozen rushed for fire-arms. I put the revolver away. They came back with muskets cocked and were going to shoot me, but, as I was unarmed, I walked into the middle of them, had a *wa-wa**, told them my *tum-tum* (heart) was very good. that I couldn't stand being threatened with a knife, They wanted to know why I ordered them away, did I suspect them of stealing? I told them I wouldn't suspect them of such a thing for the world (the beggars had stolen two pannikins that morning) but that I feared the smallpox. This regularly knocked them down for their chiefs are always telling them to keep away from the whites. Down went the muskets *capit wa-wa* (stop talking or 'nuf sed') was the word, and peace was declared. All this amid the most horrible howling and yelling I ever heard.

"Meanwhile Edwards had given an impertinent young savage a black eye and Breakenridge had shoved aside two or three more, but a *cultus potlatch* (free gift) ensued, viz. baccy and an old fatigue jacket to the boy with the black eye; the latter young gentleman immediately testified his gratitude by offering (Sappers) Edwards and Breakenridge some of his relations as sweethearts, pro tem; viz. his mother and sisters, favours which were declined . . . as for the row, I was glad when it was over,

**Wa-Wa*—Chinook jargon for talk.

Canoe Crossing, where the old trail crossed the Bella Coola River in Palmer's day. Swannell Coll., B.C. Archives

as they would have murdered us all had I not been able to pacify them. Discretion in this case was the word."

Palmer's quick-wittedness and knowledge of the Indian mentality had saved all their lives.

In his report, mention is made of various Indian villages up the river, all but one deserted, some only lately, due to the smallpox epidemic. The one still inhabited would appear to be Mackenzie's "Friendly Village" which he calls Nootkleia.

Palmer managed to get his horses up "light" to Stuie, just above the junction of the Talchako and Adnarko, up which latter stream the Indian foot trail ran, and took them packed to four miles below the foot of the "Great Slide." Arriving here July 24th he decided it was literally impossible to get farther up the valley with the horses without delaying the party a fortnight or more, they having no tools to re-route or make the trail passable. Shortly above the present Atnarko the stream again forks, the trail running up the left-hand fork, the Hotnarko. Here was camped a Mr. Hood with 35 pack-horses, in the same fix as Palmer but "bound to get through somehow." (Indomitable Mr. Hood, he later did!)

Writes Palmer: "With the greatest difficulty I succeeded in raking up a few Indians to pack to Chilcotin for me, and a pretty bother I had with the rascals!" He left his packers and horses with Hood, and proceeded on foot. "They stole my beans, stole my pannikins . . . and even stole my pepper. I couldn't horsewhip them as I longed to because I was utterly in their power for getting through. 'Coaxing and wheedling' were the words, and in seven days we reached Chilcotin where the brutes abandoned me without even saying *klahowyah* (good-bye)."

These Indians were very likely Chilcotins, who, after back-packing to the top of the "Precipice," would use their own horses. They did him the honour to accept gold instead of blankets in payment.

As the Great Slide and the Precipice had been bypassed in 1925 with a much better located horse trail, and the old trail was obliterated, I will paraphrase Palmer's description. The Atnarko Valley gradually narrowed and the mountains jutted in low broken masses into the river, crowding close to the water at the Great Slide. The Indian trail went up the face of the rock slides capped by rugged cliffs. Palmer estimated that to build fourteen miles of trail along here would cost £1,500.

This blaze from Palmer's Camp 8 of 1862, now preserved in the B.C. Archives, was cut from the old cottonwood tree shown below by Swannell's survey party.

The old trail struck directly up the Great Slide, from the foot, 57 miles from Bella Coola, at an elevation of 2,230 feet. In the loose rock the grade was so steep that the trail was worse than winding but "wriggled almost directly up the face in would-be zigzags, bitterly trying to pedestrians." Above, it was lost among cliffs and hollows until five miles from Cokelin (the foot) an altitude of 2,890 was attained.

In the seven miles up the Hotnarko Palmer found no serious obstructions except occasional slides and fallen timber. Between the forks of the Hotnarko lies a mass of basaltic rock 1,350 feet in height. This is the dreaded Precipice. The trail ran up a rocky spur, then wound among crumbling rock-fragments, finally reaching the summit of a perpendicular mass of rock by a dizzy path. (The top of the Precipice is at Mile 73, altitude 3,840.) Beyond this the route was across the great elevated Chilcotin Plateau, and his difficulties were limited to transportation and food.

Palmer arrived at Fort Alexandria on the Fraser River August 13th, 1862, after traversing 270 miles of execrable trail from Bella Coola, "with one day's provisions remaining." The provisions were largely pork and beans and Palmer wrote feelingly to his colonel: "Alexander a queer old place . . . poor grass, poor soil, but lots of beef, potatoes and milk which I don't turn up my nose at. I was beginning to think that if there were any truth in the transmigration of souls I should turn into a bean some day." The fort, he said, was the worst he had ever seen and no supplies were to be had.

For survey equipment Palmer had a theodolite, of little use to him except for observing latitude and longitude, and of no use after an Indian stole the eyepiece. He also had a sextant and probably a half-chronometer watch with which to control by astronomic fixes a compass traverse with paced distances. Altitudes were obtained by aneroid barometer and, when he broke this, he had to resort to noting the temperature at which water boiled to calculate altitude.

Information furnished him as to the route proved entirely erroneous, the Indians were difficult to deal with, "mosquitoes unbearable," and the entire route merely an Indian track. He was under-staffed, with only two soldiers and a packer who had to be left behind with the pack train. In spite of the difficulties he amassed a remarkable amount of data and the completeness of his printed report might well serve as a model. The total cost of the exploration he figured with great exactitude at £344.10s.5d., not including pay for himself and the sappers. Altogether a remarkable piece of work for an English boy of 24!

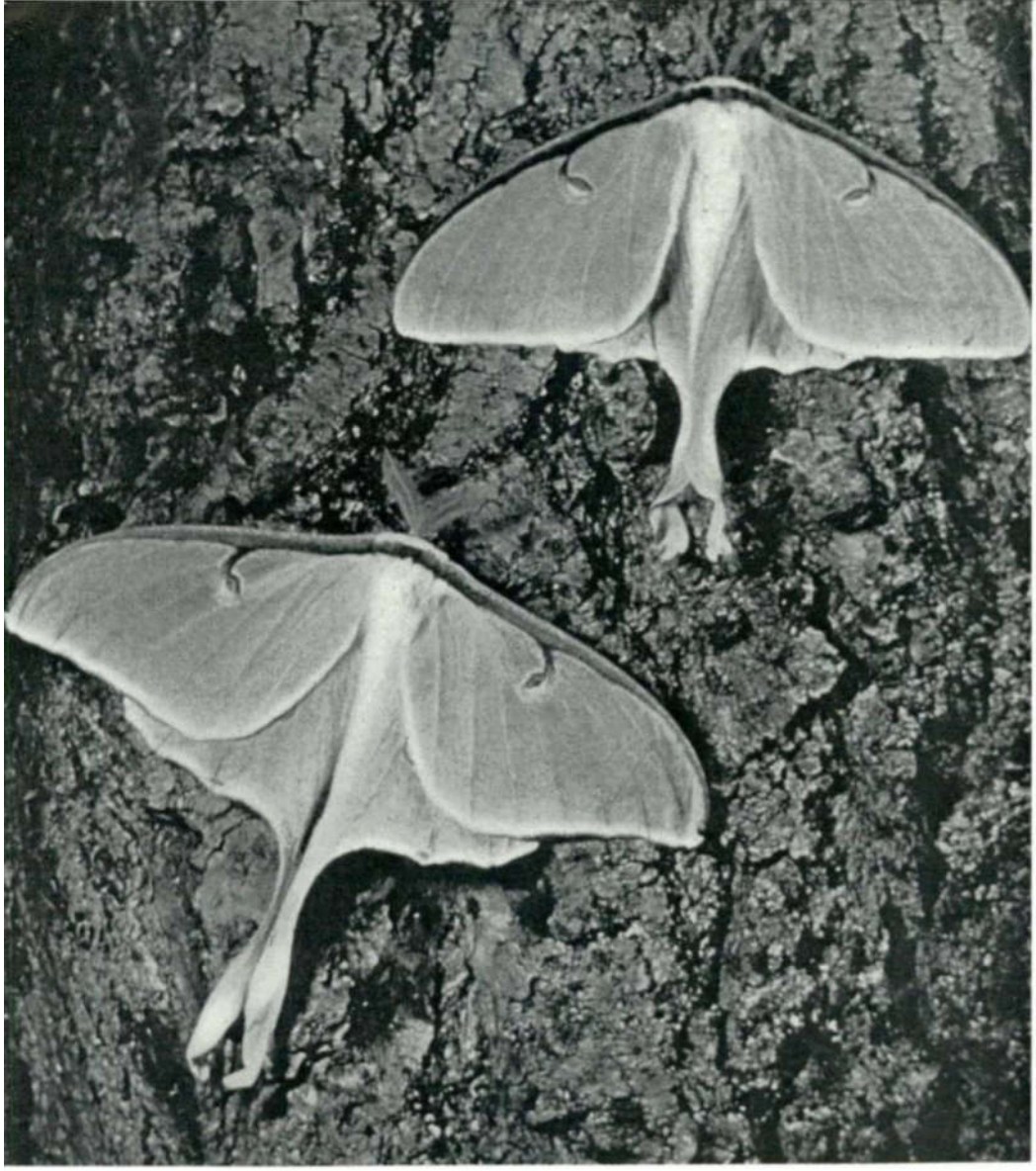
The remainder of the season the young lieutenant spent in the Cariboo gold fields. He laid out several townsites and mapped generally, as he found existing maps hopelessly inaccurate. They were probably put out by mining engineers, one of whom, possibly Tiedeman, he terms the "Arch Enemy." "If I meet him I mustn't let him know I am reduced to boiling water. He must be shut up and *my* altitudes whatever they may be, thrust well down his throat. Happily his latitude of Alexandria is six miles out, his longitude probably 18′ (minutes). I'm spiteful, Colonel, but I can't help it. He has no business to be mapping when there are R.E.'s in the country. . . . We are a gay party of B. Columbians here, viz.: [Judge] Begbie, Matthews, O'Reilly, Walker, Knipe and 'The Bishop'. I think Tiedeman is a humbug and seems to oscillate between a desire to 'blow' about The Bute (Inlet) route and get up an excitement, and a desire to keep it dark and speculate pretty largely on his own account and he tells no two persons the same story—Master Begbie has his finger in the pie too."

Evidently the Royal Engineers and what Palmer terms "the Government crowd" did not see eye to eye on many matters.

The young Royal Engineer subaltern Henry Spencer Palmer had a brilliant career ahead of him. Born in 1838 he was gazetted lieutenant R.E. in '56 and came to British Columbia with Col. R. C. Moody in '58. In 1863 he surveyed and supervised construction of part of the main Cariboo Road, returning the same year with the R.E. Detachment to England. Promoted to second captain in '66 he acted as assistant commissioner on a Parliamentary Boundary Commission. In 1868 he surveyed the Sinai Peninsula for the Ordnance Survey. A major in 1873, he was chief astronomer for the New Zealand party observing the transit of Venus. Two years later he was in Barbados as aide-de-camp to the governor, going on in 1875 to Hong Kong in a similar capacity and as engineer in charge of Admiralty work. He was promoted brevet lieutenant-colonel in 1881.

He went to Yokohama in 1882 and was loaned to the Japanese government for engineering work. Back in England in 1883 he served as Commanding Officer R.E., and went back to Japan in 1885 as brevet colonel. In 1887 he retired with the rank of major-general and, remaining in Japan on engineering projects, died at Tokyo in 1890.

He was a brilliant astronomer and mathematician as well as engineer and surveyor. Besides many official reports, including two detailing the Sinai Peninsula Ordnance Survey, he published a book on Ancient Historical Monuments in Sinai and was a frequent contributor to magazines and technical journals. ◆



The Birth of a Luna Moth

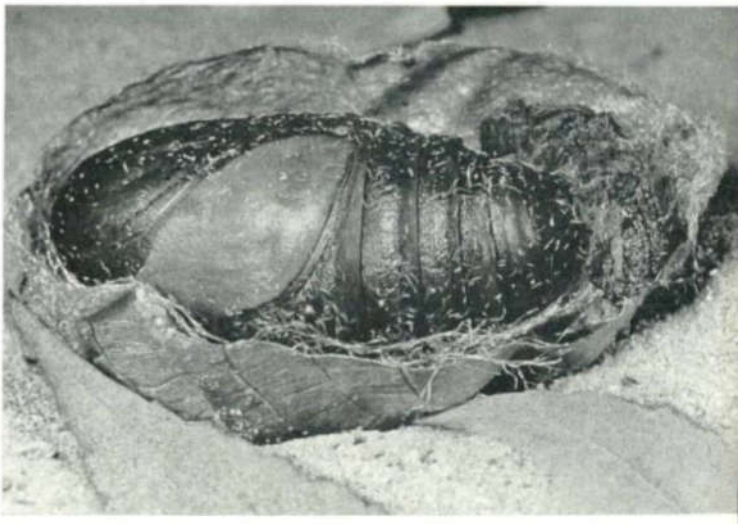
BY
HAROLD V. GREEN
specialist in micro-photography

Male (lower) and female Luna moths on the bark of a tree.

Each autumn myriads of caterpillars spin their silken cocoons. Within these envelopes, with the spark of life on the verge of extinction, they sleep through the frigid months to be born, in the spring, in a new and lovelier guise.

Some cocoons, such as the Cecropia moth's, are firmly attached to twigs and branches. Others, like those of the Luna or moon moth (*Actias luna*), are not so firm and, loosened by the storms of autumn and winter, they usually fall to the ground.

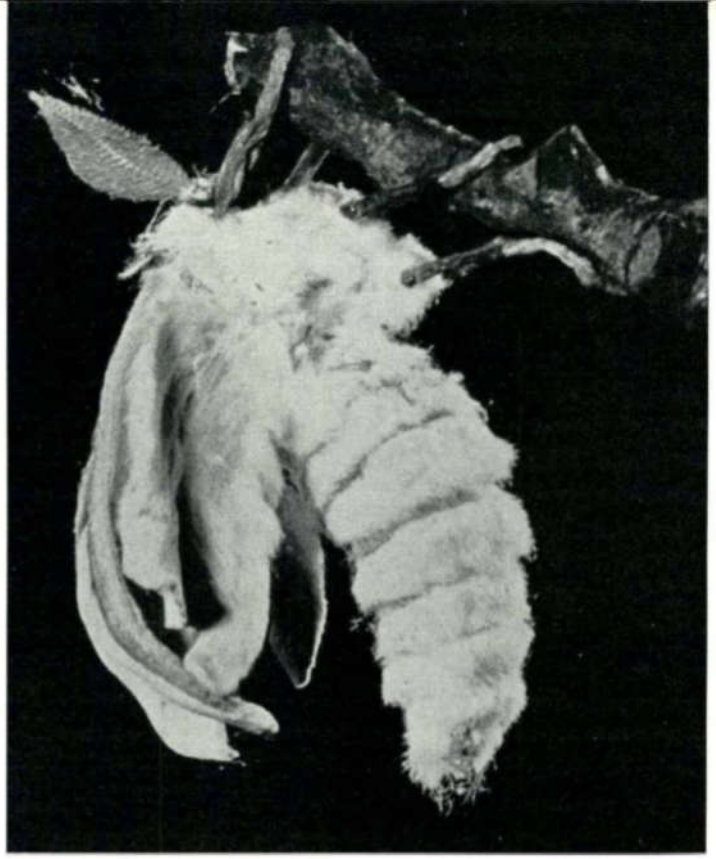
When warm spring weather comes, there is a re-awakening of life within the mummy-like pupa, which is hidden inside the cocoon. Soon a damp spot appears at the smaller end of the cocoon. Then there is a rustling, rasping noise, as the moth strains at its silken coverings, eager for release. Eventually the silken



Cocoon opened to show the pupa in its silken envelope.

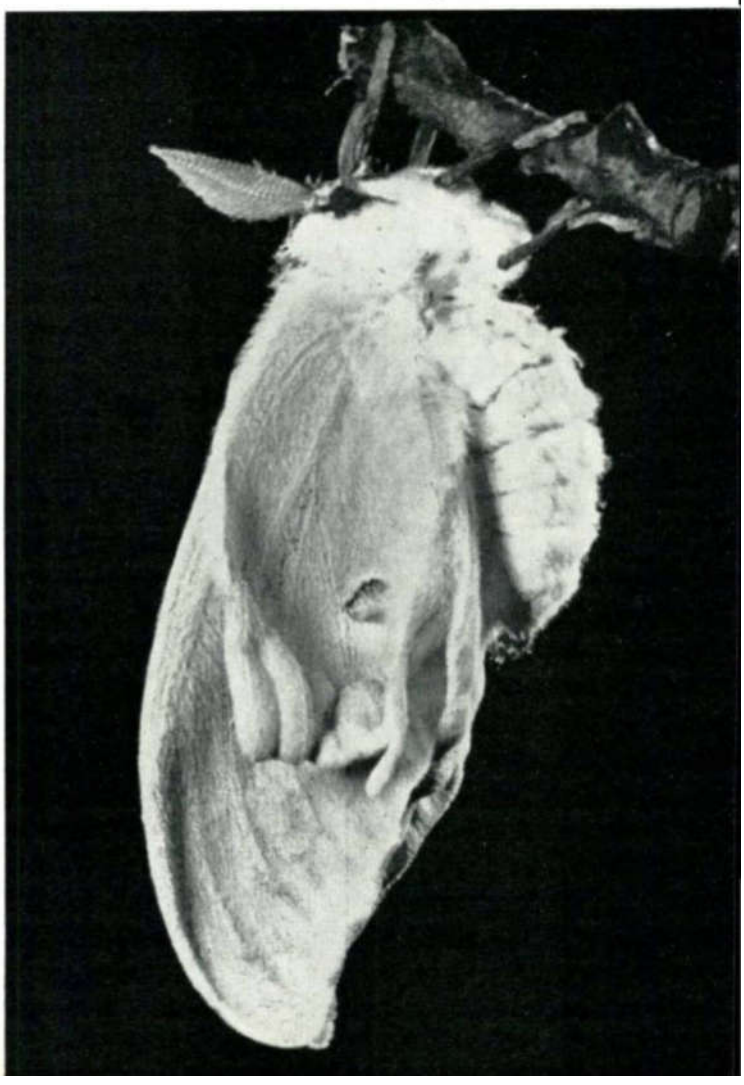
Head and forelegs emerge from the cocoon . . .

. . . and the dishevelled Luna moth climbs an upright twig.

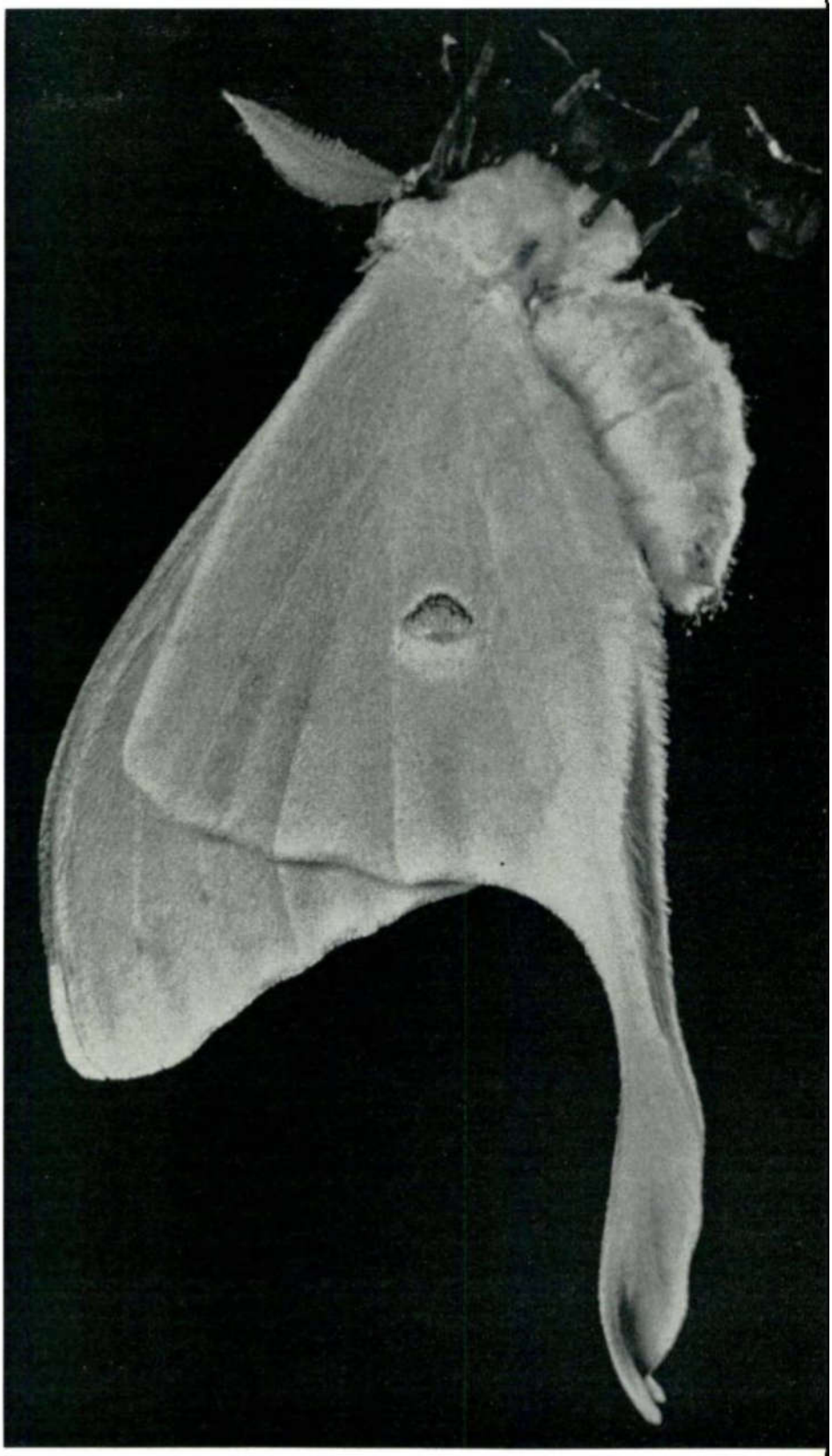


Hanging upside-down, the moth's body shrinks and the wings expand . . .

. . . and expand.



Fully developed, some forty minutes after it began to free itself of its silken cradle.



threads part and a bedraggled creature, quite different from the caterpillar that formed the cocoon, emerges to play its part in the web of life.

Dragging its frowzy body along, the newly emerged moth seeks out and climbs some tree, bush or plant. Now, hanging in an upside-down position and aided by the pull of gravity, its damp, pulpy wings begin to extend. While these are expanding, the insect emits a creamy fluid from the tip of its abdomen, which causes this portion of its body to shrink to more moth-like proportions. Soon, when the wings have expanded to their fullest extent, the creature begins to pump them up and down to aid blood circulation and to assist them in drying. Only now does it assume the beautiful tints of the mature Luna, one of North America's most exquisite moths.

Its wings, with an expanse of four inches or more, are a delicate pale green bordered in front with magenta, the same colour as the legs. On each wing is a transparent eye-spot edged with white, black, and yellow.

The Luna moth, like other giant night-flying moths, is born without a mouth and never eats a particle of food or drinks a drop of water or nectar during the few days of its adult existence. It comes from its cocoon fully developed and ready to reproduce its kind. And, often, it mates, lays its eggs, and dies within inches of the silken envelope that cradled it.

Theatrical Boom the Kootenays

BY MICHAEL R. BOOTH

THE Canadian pioneer has always loved entertainment. When he settled in the west, he built theatres in his new towns, such as Victoria, a relatively sophisticated community which had several theatres open in the palmy days of the Cariboo gold rush (the earliest in 1860), or Barkerville, a rougher mining town with its Theatre Royal of 1868.

In these cases, theatrical life immediately followed economic expansion, and this inevitable connection is particularly true of the great boom days of the 1890s in the Kootenays. Theatres went together with mining all over the American and Canadian West, and their proliferation in the new towns of eastern British Columbia is the most striking example of the association between the two.

These places were hungry for wealth, fame, and people. Their pride was enormous, and they competed savagely with one another for recognition. Day after day infant newspapers proclaimed growth and strength in headlines and advertisements. "A City of 10,000 in Less Than Two Years!" shouted the Grand Forks *Miner* in 1898. "If anyone should ask you for a tip, just tell them that Grand Forks is the coming city of British Columbia . . . our citizens should congratulate themselves that they are residing in Grand Forks." "Watch Rossland grow," editorialized the Rossland *Miner* in 1895, "it will be the railroad center, the money center, the commercial center, and the social center . . . it has advantages possessed by no other mining town in the world." Each new town thus declared itself king of the castle, the hub of economic life and the magnet for settlement.

Theatres were almost as much a matter for boastfulness as the tons of lead, zinc, silver, gold, and copper ore hauled from the hills. Rossland had an opera house in 1895 and a new one in 1897. Trail's opera house opened in 1897; Nelson's and Grand Forks' in 1899. Music halls (though they were hardly points of local pride) flourished in Kaslo, Slocan, Sandon, and Rossland.

The larger theatres were greeted patriotically upon their completion. The Hanna Opera House in Trail, built and furnished at a cost of between $7,000 and $8,000, with a seating capacity of 1,200, was described in the Trail Creek *News* as "by far the finest in Kootenay, and would reflect credit upon towns many times the size of Trail." In similar strain the Nelson *Daily Miner* called the new Nelson opera house "the smartest and brightest theatre in Kootenay . . . a building of the kind had become necessary, if we were to maintain the metropolitan character we were fast beginning to assume." The Rossland *Miner*, which had listed opera

Assistant professor of English at Royal Military College, Kingston, Mr. Booth has made a special research project of the theatres of the Canadian pioneers.

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40 PEOPLE 40
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Excursions will be run from Kaslo and Ymir for Saturday Matinee and Night.

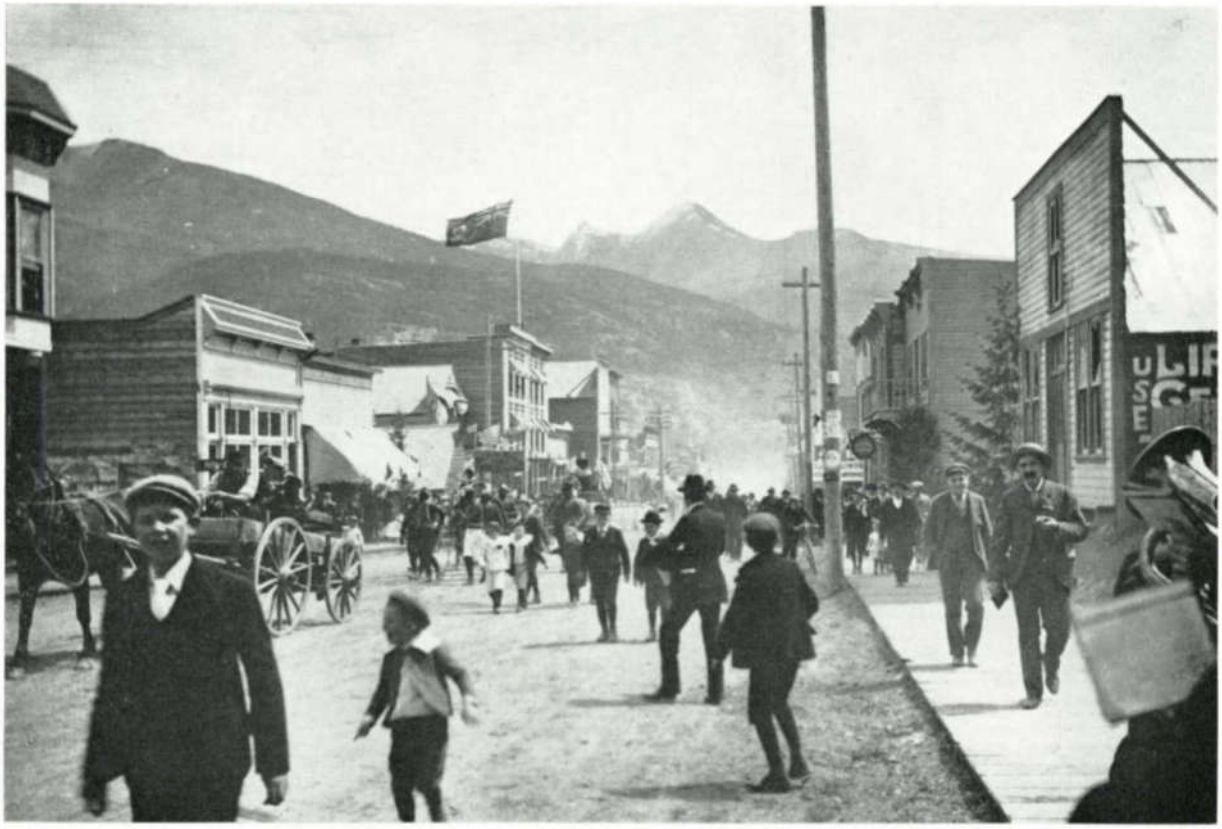
1899
Nelson Daily Miner

houses as a necessity for its town, hailed the visit of an opera company as a "swell society event . . . the best is not too good for Rossland."

The attempt to keep the crude and vigorous Kootenay mining towns respectable and decent extended to the new theatres. The management of the Rossland opera house, on its opening night in 1895, announced that "extreme care has been taken that no improper characters enter the hall." The Nelson newspaper warned actors against coarseness of presentation: "If they remember that Nelson is not a rough mining town and depend upon art more than travesty, to please us, they will surely do a good week's business." The Buchanan Dramatic Players advertised its repertory in Nelson as "Pure Drama and Comedy devoid of Vulgarity and Horseplay," and the manager of the company was quoted as realizing, after only a short visit, that Nelson "was not a western mining camp as most people imagine and that no horseplay or vulgarity would go down here." The "better taste of Nelson," he concluded, would force the company "to be especially careful in providing nothing but the most legitimate amusement." The *Daily Miner* was loud in its protests against smoking in the theatre, cat-calling, and gallery noises, all part of the awful process of gaining "the reputation of being both rough and tough," a reputation to be resolutely avoided. And the Grand Forks *Daily Gazette*, in reporting poor attendance at a concert in the Biden Opera House, said bitterly, "It is a pitiable thing when the public taste has degenerated until it demands leg-shows and songs which are fit to be heard only in houses of ill fame and bar rooms."

Naturally there were lapses from such high standards of behaviour; there was, after all, such a thing as audience reaction. A minstrel show in Rossland so disgusted its audience that they supplied themselves with stale eggs during the intermission and "regaled their would-be entertainers with them." The *Miner* seemed safe in saying that "the evening was evidently not an artistic success." In Trail the Australian Variety Company had to halt its performance because of the continuous noise of a dozen small boys in the gallery.

Interruptions of this kind, however, were rare, and the majority of theatregoers behaved decorously. What they went to see was extremely varied in character. The circuit for dramatic and vaudeville companies included all the main towns of the Kootenays and eastern Washington; Spokane, the largest, was the centre. Sometimes troupes based in Winnipeg would come west, or companies playing the coast would swing into the Kootenays after runs



Kaslo, where the notorious Theatre Comique opened in 1893, made much of its celebrations. *B.C. Archives photographs*

at the big theatres of Vancouver, Victoria, New Westminster, and Nanaimo. Occasionally a group would come from Ontario or New York on a circuit tour. These companies played almost everything. Light opera, melodrama, and minstrel shows were especially common. In 1899, the Metropolitan Opera Company (not the famous one) visited Nelson and Rossland with *La Mascotte, The Chimes of Normandy, Fra Diavolo, The Mikado, Olivette,* and *The Bohemian Girl.* In the same year, Kootenay audiences saw such melodramatic favourites as *Fanchon, The Two Orphans, East Lynne, The Wages of Sin,* the inevitable *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* and *Ten Nights in a Bar Room.* Light comedies and farces were also popular: *Charley's Aunt* drew the largest house of the 1898-99 season in Trail. Lighter vaudeville attractions—Venita and Her Kaleidoscopic Fire Dance, the Lewis Enchantment Company, marionette shows, minstrels—appeared frequently. The Great Lyceum Company from Ontario brought *Othello, Romeo and Juliet,* and *The Merchant of Venice,* the first professional Shakespeare to be seen in the Kootenays.

Sometimes there was little difference between the repertory of the larger opera houses and the smaller music halls. Three of these were open in Rossland by 1900: the Pacific, the International, and the Palace Grand. While the International featured a double bill of *Ten Bums in a Bar Room* and Belle Williams, the Quaker City Coon, the Pacific was shocking audiences with *Jack the Ripper,* Jack's execution being "the most realistic hanging scene ever produced on any stage."

The most notorious music hall in the Kootenays was the Theatre Comique in Kaslo. Kaslo was "wide open" as no other town in the boom was, and the Comique was a source of infinite trouble for the authorities. The first theatre in the interior of British Columbia since the Theatre Royal, Barkerville, the Comique was opened in May 1893 by the Holland brothers, who also operated a theatre of the same name in Spokane. It was the usual theatre-dance hall-bar combination previously familiar in most Western mining towns. Three storeys high, with a saloon on each floor and three tiers of boxes, the Comique employed eighty girls who were "box-rustlers,"

dancers, and actresses. Patronized almost exclusively by the rougher element in town, it was regarded as a hell-hole by decent citizens, a judgment that could hardly be questioned. The management did make feeble efforts at respectability. Soon after this "temple of vocal and musical novelties" was opened, it offered Saturday matinées for ladies and children, and promised that the bars would be closed. "Anything which would be offensive to ladies will not be tolerated . . . the entire performance will be conducted with propriety and good taste." The ladies and their children could see the romantic melodrama, *Kathleen Mavourneen*, Professor Samwell's troupe of performing horses, dogs, goats, and monkeys, and "songs, duets, and specialties." In June, the first assize court held in Kaslo met in the Comique and tried a man for assault. The grand jury promptly censured the court for sitting in the Comique, and the Kaslo *Claim* urged the use of a more dignified building.

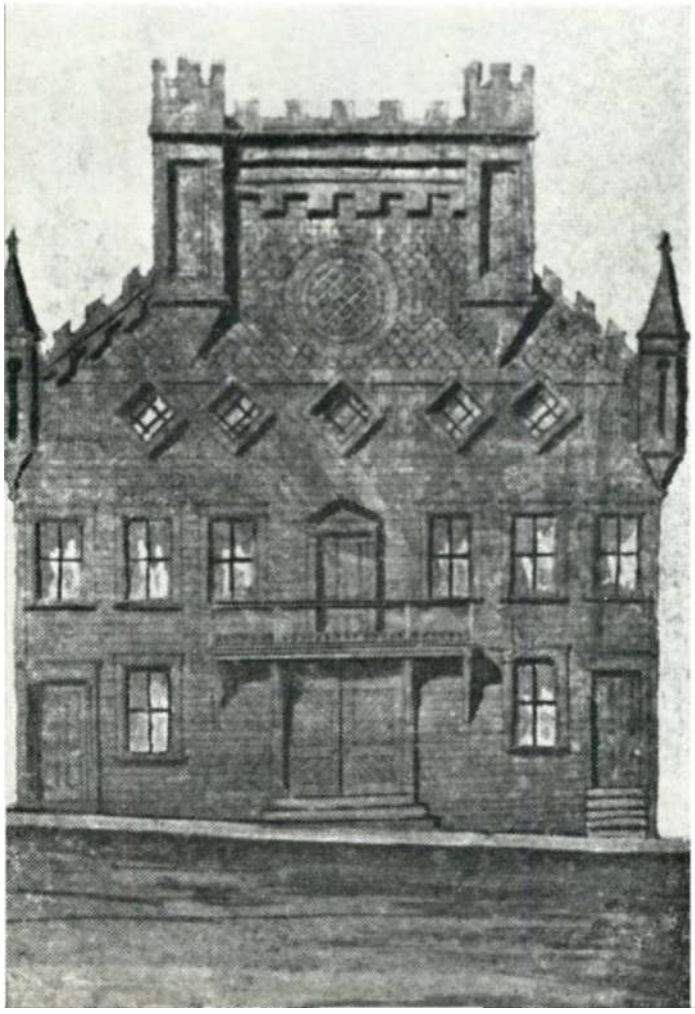
Interestingly detailed records of the Comique survive, both in the City of Kaslo minute-book and the diary of Joseph D. Graham, Kaslo's first provincial constable. One of the first pieces of business the Council of 1893 had to deal with was a petition of seventy-one ratepayers to suppress "the nuisance." However, the city must have found the Comique too profitable to close, as

On stage at the Theatre Comique, Kaslo, 1893, for what is probably a rehearsal.

it provided several hundred dollars a year in revenue from licences. Policing it was such a job that a special constable had to be hired solely for the purpose, and the licence fee of the theatre was raised from a dollar to three dollars a night to pay his salary, in spite of protests from the Hollands.

Patrolling the Comique proved an exacting duty for Graham. He had to warn the girls working there "to conduct themselves after leaving the Theatre and not to be running around the streets drunk." On another occasion he warned them to take care what they did after their work and "cautioned Emma Dale about encouraging Girls into her house from the Comique." Once he was pulled out of bed at 2.15 a.m. (the Comique never seemed to close) "by Reno who complained that Kitty Goodwin of the Comique had assaulted him by boxing his ears and that he did not like to hit her." The manager was told "to caution the female to be more careful in future." To the complaints of an eminent citizen who had been robbed of a diamond ring in the theatre, Graham replied that it was his own fault, as "he was in the Comique at 3.10 a.m. and did not appear particularly desirous of leaving the place." By far Graham's biggest task, as might be expected, was dealing with the drunk and disorderly. Here the entries in his diary are inevitably repetitious:

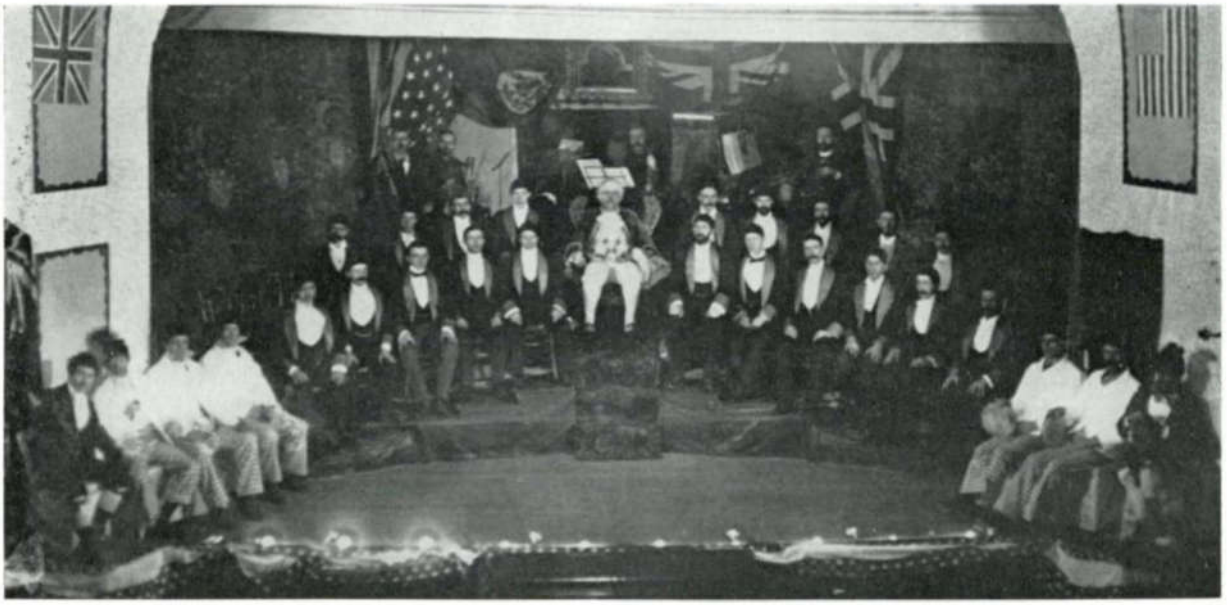
Disturbance in Comique Theatre caused by McAuliff using obscene language at 1 a.m. cleared him out . . .
Turned Hoyt out of Comique at 3.15 Drunk . . .
Dragged Jersey from out of the Comique drunk . . .
Agnes disorderly in the Comique put her outside.



The Hanna Opera House, first theatre in Trail, in 1897.

Many of Kaslo's citizens must have been relieved when the Klondike gold rush drew away the more raffish elements and the Comique closed in 1899.

The great theatrical boom lasted as long as the great mining boom. Long before their final oblivion, the theatres had a tendency to dilapidation, and many were uncomfortable from the beginning. Rossland's second theatre, Hart's Opera House, which cost $7,000 and had a seating capacity of 1,000, opened in April 1847 with *La Mascotte*, and the *Miner* at once complained of "the Artic [*sic*] severity of the temperature below stairs."



The "Dandy Coons" performing in the Rossland Opera House in January 1900 for the benefit of the Mansion House Fund.

The theatre apparently lacked heating of any kind, and "the chilling draughts that made the audience shiver and cough throughout the performance" were particularly unpleasant. It was bad business, concluded the article, "to give all the performers colds." Two years later the wooden theatre was decayed. A syndicate took over and remodelled it; stoves were at last added, an improvement that must have heartened play-goers on Kootenay winter nights. The Hanna Opera House in Trail fell into a similar state. In 1904, the Trail Creek *News* called it the most dangerous theatre in Canada, perhaps in the world. Its only exit, the newspaper complained, was a crooked, unlighted, flimsy stairway giving into a dark alley; there were no fire escapes. "Those who go to a performance at the opera house here are . . . almost certain to be half-frozen, with a practical certainty of being killed in case of panic or fire." The new management rather weakly defended itself on the grounds that the theatre had been in the same condition for seven years, that is, since its opening.

In the first decade of this century, a mining town of any size in the Kootenays had a theatre. Although some towns were already dying, others, like Fernie, Greenwood, and Cranbrook, were growing, and new theatres were built there. Like all mining booms, however, the one in the Kootenays came to an end. The depression of 1918 and 1919 swept bleakly through the mountains and valleys. Towns tumbled into ruin; some vanishing entirely, others sluggishly surviving. The theatre in Western Canada was so closely tied to economic conditions that the slightest depression would endanger it. The moving pictures also played their part—as they did everywhere—in destroying live entertainment. The opera houses of Rossland and Trail were torn down in the 'twenties; the Nelson opera house was converted to the latest craze, indoor golf, in 1930. Not one of the many theatres of Kootenay boom days is now standing. Yet in their heyday they provided vivid illustration of the social and artistic life of the new mining communities, and their very existence was a demonstration of economic prosperity. ◆

CLOUSTON GOES TO PEMBINA

BY ELAINE ALLAN MITCHELL

In the spring issue, Mrs. Mitchell introduced some of the letters of Robert Clouston written in 1843 and 1844 about his life at Fort Garry. She now recounts some later experiences told in letters preserved by the late Mrs. Rosalind Pelly, a relative of Clouston.

ROBERT Clouston's third letter from Fort Garry to his family in Orkney concerns the winter of 1845-6. The chief events for the young Hudson's Bay Company clerk were two journeys to Pembina on the United States border. During the forties the friction between the Company and the free traders in the colony was greatly intensified by the advance of American settlement in Minnesota, and matters were brought to a head in 1844 when Norman Kittson built a post at Pembina in the middle of the half-breed country. Kittson's post at the mouth of the Pembina River was on the site of the former North West and Hudson's Bay posts, within two miles of the international border. In defence the Company established a post on their side of the line in September 1845, putting in charge of it John Palmer Bourke[1], a retired officer living in the colony.

Throughout his life in Rupert's Land Clouston loved "voyaging." As he became a devotee of the romantic he delighted, of course, in the appeal of beautiful scenery but the principal attraction of travel for him was the quickening of his senses and the improvement in his health which resulted from life in the open air and the freedom from routine and restriction. He looked on the hardships and dangers involved as a challenge to his ingenuity and endurance, part of the adventure of life in the wilderness. His descriptions of his journeys display a vividness of detail which reflects the excitement of his mood.

"I had with me as guide, the Company's interpreter, Louis Ploôfe, & on the morning of Tuesday the ... of Novr., we crossed our horses over the Assiniboine river & set out upon our journey about 10 a.m. Our equipment was as follows—each carried a gun—a blanket under his saddle—a long cord for tethering his horse & a small quantity of barley. We had also a tin pot for making tea in—one tin pot for cup & saucer—one clasp knife, (as for forks, we never thought of them) a small flask of Brandy, some biscuit & a few Aurignols—These last are made of meat, chopped very small, well *peppered* & salted, rolled up into balls—covered with paste and fried—these were our agrêts. The weather was exceedingly fine for that season; warm days but sharp frosty nights.

"Our road led us very circuitously, past the Canadians' houses upon the S.W. side of the Red River, through dried up swamps, small plains & 'bluffs' of poplar, Oak & willows—and a smart trot of two hours brought us to the Riviere Sal, so called from the saline properties of its water, which though beautifully transparent is very disagreeable to the taste; it is only from 4 to 5 yards wide, but having a soft, muddy bottom, is difficult to cross. We here took off the saddles, watered & fed our horses and proceeded on our journey, passing a Canadian & two boys on their way towards Pembina to fell & square timber for the Company: we next passed my guide's brother who was driving a horse cart, leading two horses and followed by 4 or 5 dogs—man, horses & dogs all

1. John Palmer Bourke was an Irishman born in 1791 who went to Red River with the settlers in 1812. He was storekeeper of Semple's party and was wounded, but saved himself by flight. He married Nancy Campbell of St. Mary's Falls in 1821.

going to the plains to the Buffalo hunt. About 6 miles beyond the Riviere Sal we passed, at the distance of ¾ of a mile, the last houses of the Settlement tenanted by Metiss alone: they are sometimes occupied in winter but are frequently left uninhabited the whole year round, so their condition may be imagined,—thence the road led through an open plain, bounded on the left by the woods skirting the river & extending to the right beyond the range of vision—Some horses were feeding in the plain: it is remarkable with what facility the Half-breeds and Indians find their horses, when they have been wandering at will for months! They can follow their tracks through the long, withered grass that covers the plains in autumn or over the fallen leaves of the forest—where an European eye would discover no vestige of a footprint.

"By 2 p.m. the road brought us to a point of the river where a rapid is formed by a *batture* (or shoal) of stones, & called 'La rapide croche': the view from this point was beautiful. The western bank is almost destitute of trees while the opposite side is covered with a dense belt of woods—principally Oak: the one side showed traces of man—noble oaks cut down—their branches lopped off for firewood & the trunks left to decay: old camp fires marking the ground here and there & pieces of sleds and carts scattered around—while on the eastern bank, the dense and pathless woods, showed nature in all her original wildness. We watered and fed our horses again and I had a fruitless chase after pheasants—they very much resemble the grouse of Scotland in size, shape & flight but their plumage is much brighter."

They camped about eight miles farther on, on the bank of the Red River at a place called La Grande Pointe.

"The river here was skirted with willows, a quantity of which we collected upon the top of the bank and made a fire therewith—we then watered and fed our steeds, hobbled them & tethered them to stakes firmly planted in the ground. Louis Ploõfe shot a Muskrat, which he soon skinned & roasting the tail, ate it with much apparent gusto: the moon light was very bright and the night quite calm & I felt my Spirits rise at being once more free in the wilds: we made some tea and ate an aurignol with it & until 9 p.m. passed the time, telling tales to each other, varied now and again by a Canadian paddling Song. We then *turned in*—that is—we spread our capots under us—our saddles doing the duty of pillows and drawing our blankets over us, composed ourselves to sleep—and I could not close an eye—the moon's silvery orb seemed so glorious, floating through the blue waste above, dimming the brightness of the stars, that my gaze was riveted upon her: I fancied I could trace mountains and valleys distinctly and I peopled them with imaginary beings—for who can doubt that most of those bright luminaries are worlds inhabited by creatures as 'fearfully and wonderfully made' as we are? The vanity of man—excessive though it be, could never lead him so far as to think that all those sparkling orbs were made only for him to look at."

The night proved too cold for comfort and by four next morning the travellers were prepared again to start. Crossing a long plain they had to dismount and run to keep themselves warm. After breakfast the mirage made Pembina Mountain distinctly visible: indeed, the refraction that morning was so great that belts of woods more than a day's ride away could be seen. They reached the Pembina post about eleven in the morning, having spent eleven hours in actual travel from Fort Garry.

Bourke's quarters were simple in the extreme. "Mr. Bourke has a rough log house, the walls of which, inside and outside are plastered with clay, and the roof covered with earth—it is floored with rough logs: the men live in the same house, with merely a partition between them—a mud chimney in each room and a door opening from Mr. B's apartment to his trading room: the only article of furniture, a table, made by an Indian, a self-taught 'carver in wood'—We had cassettes [light, strong travelling trunks] for chairs. There was an Indian lodge close to the house and a tent made of rush mats and bark, in which were lodged the family of one of Mr. Bourke's men—consisting of 10 or 11 persons."

Clouston spent the following day visiting, with Bourke, the freemen on the Pembina River in the neighbourhood of Kittson's Fort. He explained to his parents that they were so-called to distinguish them from engaged Servants of the Company but that the term was almost exclusively applied to half-breed hunters. "About ¾ of a mile above the house we saw the post planted by Major Long[2]—marking the boundary—at a place called Munro's encampment. . . . Some wag had pulled up the post of demarcation and had placed Uncle Sam's initials towards the British territory. About 1¾ miles beyond this we passed Kittson's house and found some families encamped upon the banks of the Pembina, which is a small but deep stream: from these people we learnt, quite sufficient for our purposes, of the movements of the opposition! We returned home and had dinner, and shortly after, one of Mr. B's men arrived from the neighbourhood of the Turtle Mountain, with two horses, carrying some furs; he had performed the journey alone. Towards evening four or five young women visited us—two of them tolerably good-looking and one decidedly pretty. They were very talkative and lively and whiled away an hour or two very pleasantly—one of them showering thanks

2. The only time Major Stephen Long of the United States Army was near the Minnesota border was in 1817 when he travelled up the Mississippi from St. Louis to the Falls of St. Anthony to report on sites for military establishments. As a result of his work Fort Snelling was established at the mouth of the Minnesota River in 1819 but there is no mention of his surveying the border in Pritchett's *The Red River Valley, 1811-49*.

Prairie travelling in the Red River district in 1848 was one of a series of sketches signed H M made by an unidentified traveller in Canada between 1838 and '48. *Public Archives*

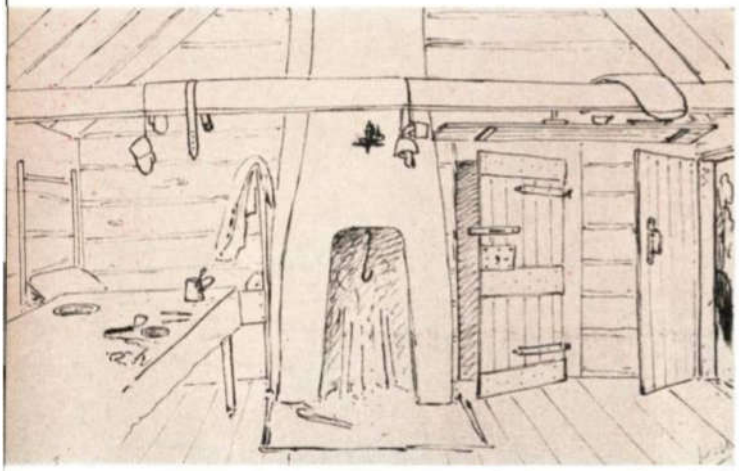
upon me for the present of a little tea and sugar for a sick relative."

In January 1846 Clouston took the same road in a sleigh. He had Bourke's son with him and each had a horse cariole in which were stowed provisions for themselves and barley for their horses. They left Fort Garry at three in the morning and breakfasted about nine at Grande Pointe on aurignols and tea, the water for which had been procured by hacking out the ice to a depth of eighteen inches. They remained by their fire until midday and then pushed on to Pembina, reaching the post about seven. When the horses had rested for a couple of days Bourke and his son left to visit Fort Garry and Clouston found himself "once more bourgeois, on a small scale: all the men but one were off, and he acted as my Cook, waiter, interpreter, woodcutter and 'drawer of water'. In a small den about twenty yards removed from my quarters, the family of another man vegetated— At that time it consisted of the mother—an overgrown amalgamation of the white and the Indian—a grown-up daughter, and a regular menagerie of wild animals,—productions of the old woman aforesaid,—who were certainly the noisiest and dirtiest little *crapeaus* I ever had the misfortune to encounter.— Montrêt was the name of this family.— There was also an Indian woman encamped in the bushes close at hand, with only a few sheets of bark and matting to shelter her from the inclemency of the winter—these, with the exception of an old ox were the only living things to be seen. The day of Mr. Bourke's departure (Sunday) I received visits from several of the people encamped on the Pembina: the first were an old woman and her daughter—the latter very good-looking —I gave them tea, bread and butter and steaks and I am sure we parted the best friends upon earth— Others came but I did not go through the same ceremonies with them: I was glad when they all went off."

With little to occupy him Clouston devoted time to his journal and has given us a vivid picture of a small wilderness post in Rupert's Land.

"Having nothing else to do I will describe my room. It is about 20 ft x 12—the walls of rough, unburked logs, plastered with mud, a window in front, with six panes of small glass—a hole cut in the opposite wall neither square or round, filled with a sheet of parchment in which one solitary pane of glass is stuck; three doors—one leading to the kitchen, another to the trading room and the third outside—one bed-stead, about 4½ feet in length—rather short for me—my feet stick out from the blankets wooing the fresh air of the morning—two tables, one covered with coarse blue cloth—a writing-desk and appurtenances, a tobo. box, pipe, fire-steel, martin-skin cap and Bear skin mittens, thereon: three 4-legged stools, a travelling case and basket—an old packing-case with hinges on it for a cassette and a pile of firewood, are all scattered about the room in elegant confusion.

"An old gun-case containing books, papers, a dressing-case, shoe-brush, and a piece of soap far gone in a decline —hangs over the covered table; a shelf above the door supports a candlestick, a tin dish with some cold steaks, mixed with lumps of clay from the walls, some plates, a tin tea-pot, a broken glass used as a salt cellar, and a bottle of mustard: along the wall are suspended, a slate, a looking-glass, a pair of white leggins edged with scarlet garters, appertaining to me, a towel and cravat—some



Interior of the H B C post at Pembina, another sketch by H M. *Public Archives*

starch, a gun, 3 pistols with shot belt &c: my splendid saddle-cloth of plaid merino bordered with red and Blue cloth, in the making of which, a young woman at the Forks, expended no inconsiderable degree of ingenuity, decorates a beam together with the skin of a red fox stretched on a mould—and, though last, not least, either as regards the useful or ornamental, my proper self—dressed in black cloth trousers, a sky blue Capot with crimson silk sash and a flowered red velvet cap on my head—and a *silver* ring on my finger: quite unique, I assure you!"

Clouston had already learnt from his solitary winter at Oxford House in 1841-2 that isolation affects mankind in a peculiar way, and that boredom is not a matter of having nothing to do but of not wanting to do anything. It had to be combated vigorously.

"My daily routine of life here is monotonous enough. I rise about ½ past 7 a.m., take a stroll of about a mile, and return to breakfast, after which Mamselle Montret comes in to dust the room & to chat—and I pass the forenoon, alternately singing, smoking, writing and talking to J. Cumming, my major domo; dine about 3 p.m. and about 4 go out to walk—have tea about 7 or 8, another chat, read, write or smoke until I become sleepy: though I feel lonely, I should like an outpost for a year or so—it would be a pleasant relief from the annoyance of the shop. . . . It is singular that when isolated from society as I am at present, a dull apathy and callousness to physical and mental exertion creeps over me like a web and it is only by acting immediately upon sudden impulse that I can shake off this lethargy. When at Oxford House I felt the same and I gradually acquired a habit of resisting it and never did I take more severe exercise;—I can thus, from my own experience, easily account for the fact, that people with little energy of character slide easily into an habitual inertness; from which it is more difficult to arouse them, than, in the middle of an arctic winter, to break the chain that binds the torpid snake. I know several instances of people thus yielding up their souls to sloth, allowing what intellect they had to lie waste and profitless,—losing even the manners of civilized life and the utmost stretch of their mental exercise being to 'kill time' as easily as they could. However strongly people in the full enjoyment of well cultivated minds, may deprecate such a state of existence and blame those who sink into it—yet it is a slough which is ever yawning under one's footsteps in this country and one requires to exert much mental controul to avoid this charybdis of the Wilderness—more self-controul in fact than most people have at command. Hence those who have lived long in Rupert's Land have a tone of mind peculiar in themselves: but the *external* changes are more apparent; one more easily yields his opinions in things which he looks upon as trivial or mere formalities of deportment—and through time they obtain such deep root that even contact with the busy world can scarcely brush away the strongly-worked net of habits and prejudices long since become part of his being—"

On his return to Fort Garry Clouston travelled by night, leaving Pembina about ten o'clock in the evening. At Grand Pointe a sudden blizzard struck the travellers and the recollection of a young man's having frozen to death in similar circumstances that very winter did nothing to lessen their apprehensions. "We continued our journey towards Rapide Croche although the snow was increasing and the wind, dashing it in our faces, deprived us at times of both sight and breath. The horses at length became almost unmanageable, darting off at a tangent from the road in order to make for shelter and as it was with the utmost difficulty that we could see the road we were obliged to seek refuge on the banks of the river at 'rapide croche': gusts of wind came sweeping through the narrow belt of wood bordering the river,—and which was a very ineffectual protection from the storm,—carrying dense clouds of snow through the air, whirling in eddies among the trees and speedily covering every thing with a thick coat of Snow. Our first work was to unharness the horses—to cover them with robes and feed them. We then had to cross the river in search of fire-wood and luckily fell in with an old raft of cordwood —part of which we appropriated for our necessity—with this we made a blazing fire which soon warmed us but it also melted the snow as it fell, so we took off our Capots, wrapped ourselves up in a Buffo. robe and lay down to

H B C post at Pembina, 1858, as depicted by W. H. E. Napier who was with the Red River Exploring Expedition.

get a little rest, trusting the violence of the storm would soon be over: this was about 4 a.m.— We had forgotten our Kettle so could not make any tea or even melt snow, but overflowings on the ice supplied us with water. We slept until about 6 a.m. and then got up and prepared to start. The storm had considerably abated but we had a traverse of about 15 or 18 miles to make, with the wind right in our teeth and not even a willow bush to break its force— however, we thought, that by daylight we could follow the track and between 7 & 8 a.m. we left our encampment. The wind was piercingly cold and we were obliged to drive our horses before us and run to keep ourselves warm: in some places the snow was knee deep but our nags struggled stoutly through it: the cold, and the volumes of snow driven with such violence in our faces actually deprived us at times of our power of respiration and I was frequently obliged to turn my back to the wind, gasping for breath. I was glad to see through the drift the half breeds' houses, at the first of which we stopped, fed our horses and had our first meal since leaving Pembina: I assure you we enjoyed a cup of warm tea: we had taken upwards of four hours to come the last 15 miles: the rest of the road was better and we reached Fort Garry about 3 p.m. ready for dinner. . . . there are not many horses would have done it better without being the worse of it; it was a very uncomfortable drive but I liked it notwithstanding."

Between the accounts of his two journeys Clouston filled in his 1845-6 letter with further "rambling notes" on life in the settlement. He divided his observations under three main headings, the products of the colony, society and amusements. The first section is considerably the longest; perhaps his enthusiasm gave out towards the end. In his analysis of Red River life there are intimations of a knowledge of half-breed life which he must have acquired from association with his sweetheart's family. Outwardly, he wrote, the colony seemed a promising place for settlement.

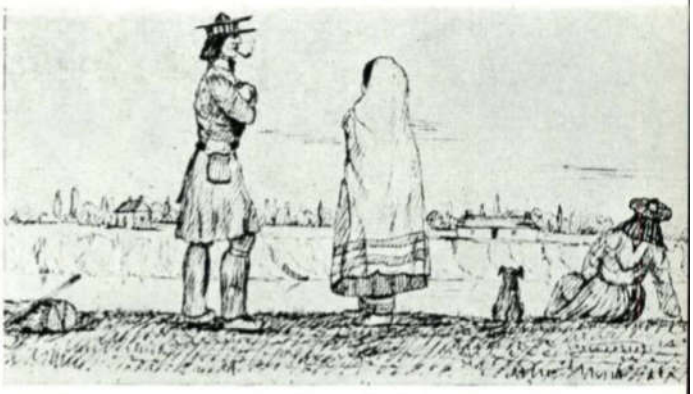
"The soil is exceedingly fertile, being of a rich alluvial and vegetable nature: & vegetation is so rapid that a piece of ground, the productive powers of which have been overtaxed, if allowed to lay waste for a few years is overgrown with shrubs innumerable, and thus if again put under cultivation, it is enriched by a productive vegetable compost which yields very great return. The season is short but the almost tropical heat exerts a magical influence upon the vegetable world: in the course of 24 hours surprising advances are made; flowers not seen before, seem to have sprung at once into bloom and trees which before were almost leafless, are now, as by enchantment clothed with verdure; and the farmer, with comparatively little labour reaps generally a rich harvest of the following products,—vizt. wheat, barley, Indian corn, potatoes, turnips, pease & beans,—oats are also grown but not so successfully: gardens produce all the common vegetables together with Melons & cucumbers. Apples have never yet succeeded but this most probably arises from want of care in their culture, because in Canada, where the climate is very nearly similar, apples are a staple commodity of agricultural produce: however, it is exceedingly difficult to succeed in raising some kinds of vegetables and fruits, on account of the swarms of ground squirrels & mice and the frequent attacks of myriads of grubs.

"Fruits of various kinds are cultivated—such as—Currants, black, red & white—gooseberries & straw-

berries. Prunes, strawberries, currants, gooseberries, raspberries & cherries are indigenous fruits, cranberries and mossberries are also found in great quantities in the swamps bordering Lake Winipeg—both these last are of great repute for tarts.

"The banks of the river were at one time clothed with woods but the advance of civilisation has thinned them considerably—however, towards the frontier, there are still dense bands of forest along the Red River, which will furnish the Colony with wood for many years to come—perhaps, indeed, outlast it. The farmers also rear numbers of Cattle, Horse, sheep and pigs at little expense so that they may all load their tables with animal food and excellent wheaten bread: they have also immense numbers of poultry—the river yields fish of various kinds: in spring, after the flush of water has subsided, Sturgeon are caught—during Summer Goldeyes predominate, & towards autumn, a few whitefish, pike, Catfish and pickerel are occasionally found, but the fishery is annually decreasing, perhaps from the quantity of filth thrown into the stream. I may also mention the produce of the plains, which though beyond the limits of the Settlement, forms the principal source of living to that portion of the Colonists, called metiss who almost invariably inherit the Indian's love of a roving life. Immense numbers of Buffalo are yearly slaughtered—sometimes indeed with a wanton levity. The Tallow is sold to the Company with a large quantity of Pemican and Dried Meat, and the Hides generally thrown away." This statement seems odd in view of Clouston's own testimony in the following paragraphs but possibly he meant that large numbers of buffalo skins were discarded and only the best ones kept.

"When the winter sets in, fresh meat is brought from the plains—so that in seasons when the Buffalo are not very distant, provisions of all descriptions are abundant and I am perfectly satisfied that one hunter's family consumes more animal food in a twelvemonth than is used in any house in Orkney in the same space of time. One family of nine or ten persons this year, to my certain knowledge consumed during the months of Novr., Decr., January and part of February, the flesh of seven Buffo Cows, besides 4 cwt. of Dried provisions and one man's regular daily rations: now this is immense but nothing unusual. Imagine the bounty with which Nature has blessed this Country, when I tell you that about one hundred families went out to winter in the plains, within a few miles of each other, subsisting entirely by the chase, which yields them excellent beef—and occasionally venison: furnishing them also with leather, the best clothing for winter, robes which serve for Blankets and the surplus of which procures them supplies of luxuries."



Red River metis, drawn by George E. Finlay about 1846.
Glenbow Foundation

Yet in spite of the abundance of nature progress was frustrated by lack of markets. "The Colony is unfortunately so isolated in the depth of the wilderness and so difficult of access either by land or by water, that the exportation of but very few of it's products will pay the exporter. The route from York [Factory] is an extremely difficult navigation—the rivers being shallow and full of rapids and portages so that only flat bottomed boats can ascend from the coast. The only other practicable outlet is across the plains to St. Peters, a journey which occupies 20 to 25 days with loaded carts, and the danger from the fierce and warlike tribes who roam over the country is great: besides, the States produce in abundance all that this country yields, excepting Moose and Buffo. Leather, which finds a ready sale at St. Peters—and only the towns and villages on the border of the wilds require cattle—therefore this market cannot be of long continuance. Wool, if exported in large quantities, might perhaps pay all expenses, which to people here, would be clear gain—because the time occupied in tending their sheep and the food used by them in winter could not, from the nature of the country and climate, be applied to better purpose.

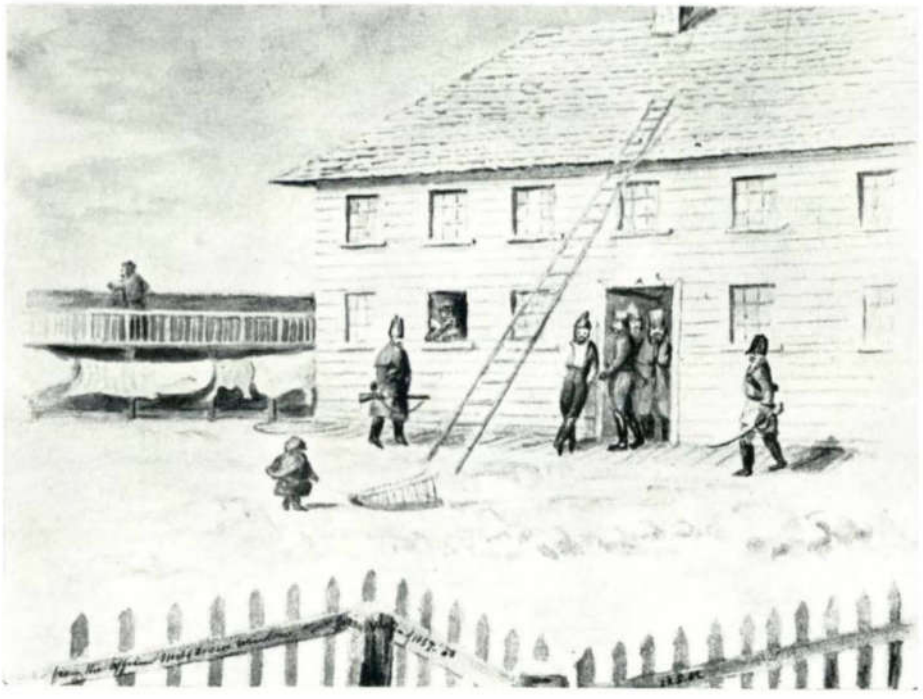
"However, the most sanguine cannot expect that this Colony can ever have a large export trade; Nature has interposed barriers which nothing less than a convulsion of nature will overcome. There is a trade carried on annually with the States by Settlers from this place, but it is not upon the increase and does not seem to enrich those who pursue it. They carry thither moccasins and other garnished work, leather &c and receive in return, Coffee, Sugar, Tobacco, Cottons and a variety of bagatelles, which articles can be procured at a cheaper rate, than from Europe—they however, pay an import tax of 10 pCent to the public fund."

According to Clouston, five classes made up the gradations of Red River Society. "The upper class is composed of retired officers of the service [H B C] and the clergy: then the Scotch and Orkney farmers, most of whom are very comfortably settled; several of them are importers

of Goods from England,—next, the Canadian habitans, who, though not such good farmers as the Scotch, are yet, many of them, possessed of abundance of farm stock and are more provident than the metiss, though they have still some of the levity of character natural to all of French extraction. The metiss, both of European and Canadian extraction, are in general hunters, and, like their country-men, the Indians, are woefully improvident, living only for the present moment. They are generally a lively race, hardy and vigorous; bearing hardships and even starvation with stoical fortitude: but, unfortunately most of them retain a strong dash of the Indian nature; they are vindictive &, when their passions are roused, are as brutally cruel as Indians: they have no gratitude, unless the word means, 'a lively sense of favors expected': they are very illiterate, few or none being able to read or write, so it may be imagined, that they are not the most tractable subjects in the world. The last to enumerate are the voyageurs, chiefly Half-breeds. They are occupied during the summer in performing trips to the coast or to Portage La Loche, and during winter hunt the Buffalo and collect peltries. They are, like the regular hunters, improvident and generally poor: they take about half their wages in advance, and during their absence, their families make frequent applications for supplies, so that at the end of their voyaging they are seldom able to equip themselves for the winter without further advances from the Company. Thus their lives are one unbroken scramble in the slough of bondage (for, certainly a debtor is not a freeman) but they care little for this—they would run into debt beyond all hope of retrieving themselves could they find people willing to become their creditors."

To his favourite subject Clouston devoted a separate paragraph. "The half-breed women are not very beautiful as a race but there are many remarkable exceptions and the Canadian half-breed girls match any class in the Colony, either in beauty or engaging manners: they are very lively and have very little *mauvaise honte*, and this, united to very fine figures, makes the halfbreed girls very formidable to soft-hearted bachelors: but alas! their charms soon fade, which is the effect of climate and the peculiar manner of living: even Europeans soon lose their fresh complexions in this Country and after the lapse of 15 or 20 years look like animated yellow turnips or parchment bladders half-filled with air."

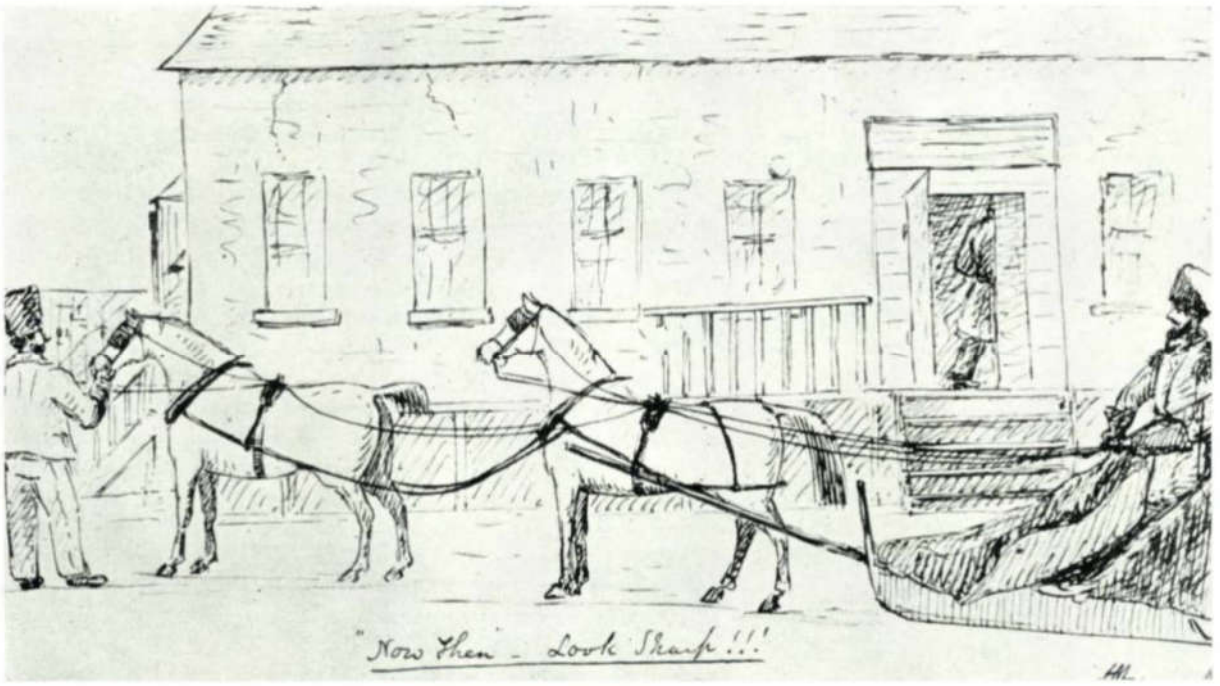
The settlement offered some social distractions but, on the whole, in Clouston's opinion was sadly inferior to Orkney. "The principal amusement is cariole-driving; almost every man has got a horse and cariole or at least, an ox and a sledge. A man who thinks he has a good trotter takes pride in covering his harness with bells, and races with anything that comes his way; so that a good horse does not last long but is speedily wind-broken, spavined, or galled in the legs. People who can spare the time, generally take a daily drive so that the road is kept pretty good all winter. Another amusement is dancing, which they dearly love. There are no public amusements of any description—no clubs or public rendezvous for the gentlemen, whose chief enjoyment seems to be in solitude and smoking. Parties are few and far between and when they do come, are *awful* bores—such a want of



The men's barracks at Fort Garry in the winter of 1857-8. A water-colour view from the window of the officers' mess by Major Seaton who was in command of the troops.
Public Archives

young people & a sad lack of that warm-hearted hospitality and good feeling exhibited at home and in their stead, a cold formality with an everlasting monotony of remarks upon the weather and upon the failings of neighbours—varied perhaps by an ear-rending howl from some old lady with a cracked voice but who has a high opinion of her vocal power,—or perhaps, a most inveterate thumping & strumming upon an old piano whose notes don't harmonise: or, it may be a dull game at whist. Very few of the old residents introduce their families into

had often been struck, he said, with the thought that these were most singular examples of crime meeting its punishment even in this world. Alexander Ross in his *Red River Settlement*, published in the early 1850s, records the same story and puts forward the same theory, the only difference being that Ross is convinced that the men's fates were indeed an instance of divine justice, while Clouston's skepticism will not allow him to accept the conclusion entirely. Whence did the story originate? Most probably it derived neither from Ross nor from



"The tandem" at Lower Fort Garry, sketched by H M before 1848. *Public Archives*

their own circle of society: the Sons are generally farmers or Buffo. hunters with little or no education, and the young ladies seldom appear except to join in the dance. Some of them however, are very well educated and very pleasant girls, but upon the whole, a pleasant party is a rare phenomenon, & I often think with regret of the evening parties in Orkney, where the company are of all ages and every one could find an agreeable companion—but this Country denies one all such enjoyment, and really, in time, unfits one for Society."

Clouston ended his letter by recalling the story of the massacre of Seven Oaks in 1816 and relating the violent deaths which overtook many of the victorious party. He

Clouston but was a true Red River superstition, akin to the one attached in the sixteenth century to the deaths of Charles V's soldiers who sacked Rome or, in our own, to those of the archaeologists who opened the tomb of Tutankhamen.

Like all pioneer communities Red River in the 1840s had its drawbacks but the impression which is left with us after reading Robert Clouston's letters is far from an unhappy one. It is evident that he found his life in the settlement not lacking in interest and his fellows, on the whole, congenial and amusing. When he came later to look back on his years at Fort Garry he was quite ready to admit it. ◆

NORTHERN BOOKS

ABANDONED
The Story of the Greely Arctic Expedition 1881-4
by A. L. Todd

Introduction by Vilhjalmur Stefansson

McGraw-Hill, New York and Toronto. 1961. 323 pages. Illus. $5.95.

Reviewed by James Lotz

IN early July, 1881, the sealer *Proteus* left St. John's, Newfoundland. Aboard her were twenty-two members of the Lady Franklin Bay expedition, led by Lieutenant Adolphus Washington Greely, U.S. Army. Stopping briefly in Greenland to pick up a surgeon and two Eskimos, the *Proteus* pushed north through Smith Sound and delivered her passengers to Discovery Harbour. Here, at 80° N, in northern Ellesmere Island, the expedition built Fort Conger. This was the farthest north of the chain of stations established during the International Polar Year, the forerunner of the International Geophysical Years.

Greely and his party of army volunteers spent two years in the field, exploring unknown parts of Ellesmere Island and Greenland. A new "farthest north" was reached in Greenland, and a mass of scientific data collected. In August 1883, Greely and his men left Fort Conger, in accordance with instructions, and set off south to be picked up by a relief ship. After a hazardous journey by small boat and on ice floes, the party, all in good health, if somewhat divided in spirit, reached the mouth of Smith Sound. Here they learned the terrible truth. The relief ship had been lost in the ice, few supplies and little food had been cached for them, and no further rescue attempts were to be made that year.

Official incompetence had sealed the doom of the twenty-five men. They had been abandoned.

At Camp Clay, on Pim Island in Smith Sound, Greely and his men passed a terrible winter, with no real hope of relief. Food ran out, the hunting failed, and yet the party hung on, only to die, one by one, when spring came. On 22 June 1884 a relief expedition finally reached camp Clay. Only Greely and six men, one without feet or fingers, remained alive.

Mr. Todd relates the tragedy of the Greely expedition with skill and objectivity. Drawing on the diaries of the expedition members, he paints a moving picture of ordinary men trapped in a terrible situation. Starvation, suffering, sickness, mutilation, death—every horror was met and mastered, while their lives trickled out, day after terrible day, at "the outpost of the lost." The whole drama of the Greely saga, and of the impact it had when the survivors returned to the United States, has been splendidly recreated. This book should be read not only by those interested in Arctic exploration, but by every believer in the power of the human spirit to triumph over the worst disaster.

Mr. Lotz was meteorologist with the Canadian government expedition to northern Ellesmere Island in 1957 and 1958. He has since joined the Department of Northern Affairs.

THE MAN WHO HAD TO HANG: LOUIS RIEL
by E. B. Osler

Longmans, Green, Toronto, 1961. 320 pages. Illus. $5.00.

Reviewed by George Woodcock

THERE are certain historical figures around whom collective emotion crystallizes, so that they cease to be men and become symbols of conflicting social forces. Captain Dreyfus in France, Sacco and Vanzetti in the United States, were of this company; so, in Canada, was Louis Riel. What Riel actually did—his leading of two small rebellions by a few hundred métis farmers and hunters—would in itself fill a very small space in the pages of history. But in its consequences Riel's life was like the stone that starts an avalanche. His first rebellion led to the creation of Manitoba and thus set the pattern for the organization of the Canadian West; his second rebellion and his subsequent execution precipitated deep regional antagonisms and led to a shift in the Canadian political scene whose effects lasted for seventy years. For many years after 1885 Canadians found it hard to see Riel in other than emotional terms, either as the great traitor or the great martyr.

In recent years, however, we have been presented with much of the material for a rational assessment of Riel as an actual historical figure. George F. C. Stanley's *The Birth of Western Canada* appeared in 1936, and has since been reprinted; it remains the best basic history of the movements in which Riel figured so dramatically, but it is incomplete biographically. In 1955 W. M. Davidson published *Louis Riel*; in trying to be fair, Davidson was perhaps too favourable to Riel, but he presented many unfamiliar facts and seriously attempted to probe the nature of a man whose complex personality had been too much obscured by the passions of partisan debate.

Now another biography of Riel has been published—*The Man Who Had to Hang: Louis Riel*. The author, E. B. Osler, belongs to the same family as B. B. Osler, who appeared for the prosecution in the trial that led to Riel's execution. While the author in no way repudiates his distinguished forbear, he writes of Riel with great sympathy, seeking to show without prejudice the kind of man he was—generous, passionate, idealistic, cunning after the manner of peasants, and always touched with a strain of unbalance that led finally to the megalomania which had such tragic consequences for Riel himself and for many others. His study is not highly original; most of his facts can be found in either Stanley or Davidson, and even his arguments have been anticipated by other English Canadians who have sought to be fair to Riel. But he puts his case convincingly, showing how far the métis rebellions were in fact provoked by a combination of indifference, ignorance and calculation in Ottawa. He does not justify Riel's execution of Thomas Scott in March, 1870; on the other hand, he shows how little protest it evoked on the Red River and how much it was manipulated for party ends in Ontario. He does not justify the appeal to force in 1885, but he does show that Riel by this time was a man who could hardly be held responsible for his acts. He leaves little doubt in one's mind that Riel "had to hang" because political forces and popular emotions demanded his execution; in other words, Riel died not for what he did, but for what he had come to represent in the larger context of Canadian political struggles.

However, while *The Man Who Had to Hang* suggests convincingly that it was a sure instinct which led the Regina jury to make its unregarded recommendation for mercy, it remains rather unsatisfying as a biography. Mr. Osler can never quite make up his mind whether to be scholarly or popular. The result is that some important facts are skimmed

over lightly, while the author has an unfortunate habit of trying to reconstruct dramatic conversations as "they must have happened," and in this he is rarely successful. Historical fiction and biography are separate arts, and the attempt to mix them does not work out in practice.

Mr. Woodcock, of the English department of the University of British Columbia, is the editor of "Canadian Literature."

THE LONELY LAND

by Sigurd F. Olson

Knopf, New York; McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, 1961. 273 pages.

Sketches by Francis Lee Jaques. $5.00.

Reviewed by Clarence Tillenius

THERE is exhilaration in facing danger. For men of action life is—ideally—a series of risks met, weighed, and overcome. A swelling exultation as the peril nears, a sustained and tight-lipped concentration of force to meet the crisis, followed by peaceful interlude and dreaming reverie when danger is past.

Nothing so illustrates this pulse-quickening tempo as shooting rapids in a light canoe. The placid river, narrowing, begins to writhe and mutter at the roar of rapids ahead. A sudden constriction of the throat as "white horses" rear up in front: the churning waters, the thrust and parry of the bow paddler and split-second response in the stern; hissing combers and jagged fangs of rock; and suddenly the whirlpools passed and the long, gliding river again.

When Sig Olson writes of canoeing in the great wilderness area of timber, lakes and rock known to northerners simply as "The Shield," his unique skill with words, his witchery of description, invests and heightens every action.

In two beautifully written previous books, *The Singing Wilderness* and *Listening Post*, the titles themselves are eloquent of the love he bears the silent places. *The Lonely Land* has the beauty of description but with a difference. The two earlier books were rather interwoven essays than continuous story. In this book the six latter-day voyageurs embark at Ile à la Crosse in three canoes and day by day through sun and storm retrace the fur trade route down the Churchill River. So poignantly does Olson evoke the atmosphere of the journey that the reader has a feeling of deflation and loss when the inevitable end of the trip arrives and they step ashore at "the oldest H.B. post in the North-west," Cumberland House.

On the turbulent Churchill we come to meet—but not to know—the five companions of "the Bourgeois," the Canadian Army's Major General Elliot Rodger, Netherlands Ambassador Anthony Lovink, Canadian Bank Note Company president Denis Coolican, national director of Canadian Clubs Eric Morse, and Defence Research Board Chairman, Omond Solandt. Obviously richly interesting personalities, the reader would like to know them: but it is not to be. One enters the wilderness to escape the world and to find one's self; but this must be a personal experience and cannot well be shared. The author remarks truly that the nature of his book precludes any approach to a more intimate characterization.

This is the story of a river journey and with unerring skill Sig Olson tells it. Interesting to anyone, it must particularly grip those who have themselves known the delight of white water and flashing paddle blade. Drawings are by that master of black and white, Francis Lee Jaques. For the reviewer, personal acquaintance with some of the people who appear in the book heightened the pleasure of reading it, but there is no question that all who love wilderness and the far places will find in themselves a deep response to *The Lonely Land*.

Naturalist and artist, Mr. Tillenius is an experienced wilderness traveller.

ESKIMO CHILDHOOD AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

by Margaret Lantis

University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1960. 215 pages. $4.75.

Reviewed by R. W. Dunning

THIS book is a further study of the Nunivak Island people, now well known from the author's earlier material on ceremonialism. It consists of a number of biographical statements from informants in which the ethnographer carefully avoided guiding the interviews beyond that of occasional questions to clarify the meaning. A complete set of background notes, as well as genealogies, Rorschach tests and illustrations of carvings and drawings are included.

It is a book for the specialist who will glean information about the earlier form of residence and mobility, interpersonal relationships, attitudes and practices concerning religion, as well as information about the individual speaker's position in society from the psychological point of view.

What should prove of interest to the general reader is the autobiographical details which show the Nunivak Islanders as people with their own individual problems of adjustment in growing up, marrying and earning a living. Moreover, the subjective personal accounts will do something to dispel the popular stereotype of the "smiling Eskimo."

Dr. Dunning is an anthropologist at the University of British Columbia whose field work among the Indians resulted in his book on a northern Ojibwa band.

ANGEL OF HUDSON BAY

The True Story of Maud Watt
by William Ashley Anderson

Clarke, Irwin, Toronto, 1961. 217 pages, illus. $4.95.

Reviewed by James McCook

TWENTY-FIVE days out of Fort Chimo on a hard Ungava trail, Maud Watt wrote in her diary, "The trip seems to be agreeing with us." This entry was typical of the sturdy spirit of the fur-trader's wife who had chosen to share her husband's life in the North. The trip had started on 9 April 1918, and ended at Sept Iles on the St. Lawrence—600 miles as the crow flies—early in June.

With her husband, Jim Watt, and a few Indians, Mrs. Watt travelled through country it was believed no white woman had seen before. It was indicative of a generous spirit that when they met hungry Indians they parted with ammunition from their own scanty supply before continuing a journey in which food resources would, to say the least, be uncertain.

This was one of the heroic journeys of the North for a woman. It was undertaken when Mr. Watt, stationed at the Hudson's Bay Company post at Fort Chimo, decided that as the supply ship had not arrived—and who could say what war development had prevented it? —there must be an attempt to bring in goods overland if no other means could be found.

During the journey the Watts paused briefly at the ruins of Fort Nascopie after they had been a month on the trail. Maud Watt could not but think of the young daughter of Lars Connolly who had come with her father to this remote and short-lived establishment and was drowned when she broke through the ice on a lake.

There was no stint to the praise from experienced Northern travellers when the Watts completed their journey; it was not only a matter of endurance and courage but of good planning.

To those of us who learn of the North through books the name of Watt is familiar. Mrs. Watt, with her husband at fur-posts, was a model of kindness to the Indians, her hospitality and understanding of their problems being in the best tradition of the North.

She made many friends, among them men prominent in public affairs in Que-

Reproduced with pride is the award conferred on "The Beaver" by the Canadian Historical Association in the category for periodicals other than historical journals. The 1961 award was made to this magazine "for its publication over many years of historical articles of consistently high quality and its outstanding contribution to the literature of the fur trade."

bec. When James Watt at Rupert House decided that a beaver conservation program should be started to give Indians a more certain fur harvest, she went to Quebec and found a ready hearing for the suggestion that a reserve under provincial authority be established. The lease of 7,200 square miles was given in her name. Whatever the initial doubts and reservations about the plan, its success was soon recognized. The best advertisement for the system is that while there was only one reserve in 1932, less than twenty years later there were eleven.

The Watts lived at Rupert House for twenty-four years and there Jim died. Her affection for the North and its people was such that Mrs. Watt could not happily remain in the South. She returned to Rupert House where the province gave her the title of "Warden" and she saw a longhouse for Indian councils built in memory of her husband.

Mr. Anderson, like many another modern author, has much conversation within quotation marks and it may be doubted if the exact words can be recalled after many years have passed. But no matter, this is a most interesting story, briskly told.

Mr. McCook, whose contributions are familiar to "Beaver" readers, is associate editor of the Ottawa "Journal".

THE CURVE OF TIME
by M. Wylie Blanchet

Blackwood, London, 16/–; Copp Clark, Toronto, 1961. 202 pages. $3.25.

Reviewed by Gray Campbell

THE British publishers, Blackwood & Sons, picked this book by a Canadian for their 1961 list and in doing so they made no mistake. It is a well written story by a master craftsman with a style and beauty completely her own. I say this critically because I looked for the weak points one expects in a first book. The story is tight, and has all the touches of the professional. In this sense I mean one who takes her work seriously, who writes only when she has something to say and then says it with a wonderful economy and magic of phrase.

Mrs. Blanchet lives on Vancouver Island in a secluded retreat of her own. This first book of hers is the story of summer cruises along the British Columbia mainland in a modest little boat with her crew of small children. But the book is more than that. The story itself is simply a narrative thread against the huge tapestry of the island-studded waters, the inlets and mountains. The people are there for contrast and relief against the massive backdrop of the almost overwhelming scenery. Here is a book for the marine library of all people who cherish the dream of exploring the coast north from Vancouver.

There is more than knowledge and light entertainment in Mrs. Blanchet's

story. It is ageless, to be read, and read again, for lessons in good construction, for the moods this artist can impose upon you, hold, and then release, always in a charming style full of vitality. Mrs. Blanchet paints word pictures of the exciting movement of a smal' boat in large waters, keeping her mood and themes running like a dark current . . . now merging into sunshine, now plunging into adventure, bucking winds and tides and misfortune with neither rose-coloured nor dark glasses. What could be more descriptive than this:

"Your boat dashes towards the rocky cliff beyond the shallow cove on your right; and the cliff, equally delighted, or so it seems, rushes towards your boat. You wrestle with the wheel of your straining boat, and finally manage to drag the two apart . . . and you are out of danger in a backwater."

Or this awakening in a mist-filled fiord: "The mountains had tossed off their comforters and were sticking up their heads to look about them. . . ."

With this aptitude for conveying a scene, she very cleverly weaves into the action of the tale the living history of the land, to show us the fabric of discovery, delight, and disappointment that met the early explorers. She shows expert knowledge of the Coast Indians and their customs. In fact she often drops a primitive curtain over the story so that you, too, are caught in the Curve of Time, suspended in some dimension that includes past, present, and future.

But just when you begin to sense the lurking menace of Indian folklore, and uneasy foreboding hovers over your shoulder by the magic of this writer's pen, she waves away the aboriginal spirits, snaps you back to the present, and there you are adventuring, chuckling, eager for the sight around the next point. And you make a peaceful anchorage, safe in the present.

Mrs. Blanchet mentions "turning over the centuries like the careless flip of a page," and finds a tree "so old that nothing could amaze it any more." This is good writing when it makes the reader see more clearly, and savour the moment in space and time.

Equally exciting is her knowledge of the creatures of nature. "Crows at some unknown signal dropping helter-skelter, head over heels, down through the air towards the earth and destruction . . . then as suddenly resuming their flight on normal wings like perfectly normal crows."

You will thrill to the adventures of mountain climbing, sharing a berry patch with a bear, being frightened by a cougar, amused by ravens and almost overwhelmed by whales.

Through it all there is the feeling that you are privileged to share a most wonderful experience with some lucky children fortunate to have a mother so courageous, experienced, trail-wise in life, close to nature, and familiar with the history and lore of their country.

Mr. Campbell, who described his experiences in becoming a rancher in Alberta in his book "We Found Peace," now lives on Vancouver Island.

THE BIRTH OF WESTERN CANADA. A HISTORY OF THE RIEL REBELLIONS

by George F. G. Stanley

Reprinted by the University of Toronto Press. 1959. xiv, 475 pages. Illus. Maps. $6.95.

Reviewed by L. G. Thomas

A STRIKING development in the field of historical publication since the war has been the appearance of the paper-back. Many of the paper-backs are produced especially to meet the limitations of that format, which is not easily adapted to the production of the substantial volumes historians have been in the habit of offering the more limited public of the past. This makes all the more welcome the appearance of a reprint by the University of Toronto Press of Professor George F. G. Stanley's *Birth of Western Canada*.

The Birth of Western Canada, of which the more precise subtitle is *A History of the Riel Rebellions*, was first published by Longmans, Green and Company in 1936 but the remaining copies of the original edition were destroyed in the blitz of 1940. The book thus became something of a rarity, as students and teachers of Canadian history, not to mention harassed librarians, will readily attest. Fortunately the original plates survived and the University of Toronto Press has rendered a valuable service to a wide public in making this important book again available with new and helpful maps prepared by Major Bond and with additional illustrations.

The book has stood the test of time remarkably well. After 25 years Professor Stanley's thesis has, as he asserts in his new introduction, not been seriously challenged, for few today would disagree that "the underlying cause of the half-breed opposition to Canadian expansion in Red River" was the "feeling of ownership and nationality" of the people of the region. To describe the resistance of 1869-70 as a "clash between primitive and civilized peoples" is perhaps more questionable. As the writing of Professor W. L. Morton and others has shown, the people of the Red River were by no means "primitives." The Red River valley a century ago was not so much a frontier community in the usual sense of those words as an isolated island of civilization. It might be more accurate to characterize the conflict of 1869-70 as a clash, not between the primitive and the civilized but between a developing culture and an intrusive one. The violence of Wolseley's troops, to which the author pays scant attention, does not suggest that the savages were all on one side. Professor Stanley's book certainly removes the props from the contention that the Riel risings were manifestations of the traditional hostilities of Quebec and Ontario but this has not prevented subsequent writers from almost entirely ignoring the part played, especially in 1869-70, by the English-speaking "native-born," to use the polite term of the missionaries.

The Birth of Western Canada devotes rather more space to the events of 1885 than to those of 1869-70. This is understandable, for twenty-five years ago little had been written on the period of Western Canada's history immediately following its entry into confederation. Unfortunately this remains true today and a more extended account of this neglected field by an historian of Stanley's stature would be warmly received.

Professor Thomas is head of the department of history at the University of Alberta.

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A sealskin picture from the Eastern Arctic collected about ten years ago. It is made of stitched appliques of dark skin from which the hair has been removed. To obtain the light background, the dark layer of skin is peeled off and the under layer bleached in the sun, becoming almost white. It is obvious that it is but a short step from pictures such as this to the sealskin stencil of the modern Eskimo graphics made possible by access to paper and paint, materials not previously available.

Photograph by Rosemary Gilliat

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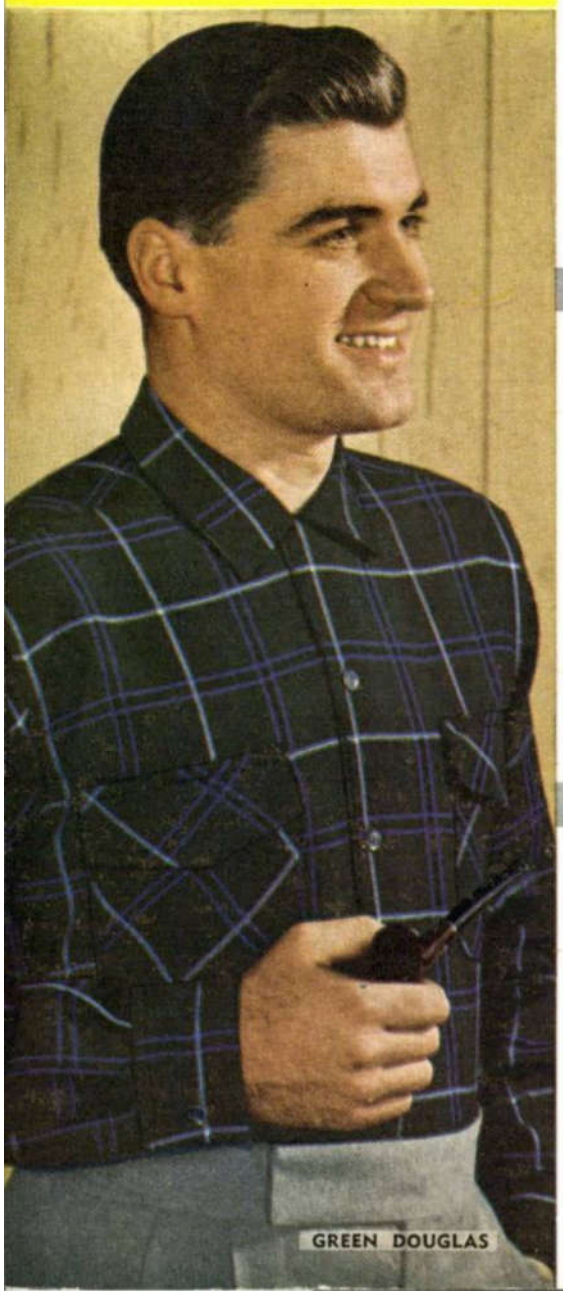

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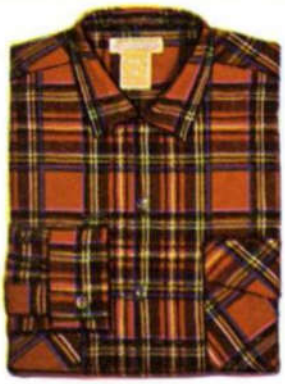

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